


KABIR

He rebelled against the established institution of religion. He spoke strongly against blind faith and ritualism. Kabir, who belonged to neither Hindu god nor Muslim wrote his couplets urging people to rise against orthodox thought. Kabir's words can still iron out religious differences between communities and destroy pointless pride. Everyone, he said, is equal and all gods are one. So difficult was this for the people of his time to understand that some of them resolved to be rid of him.


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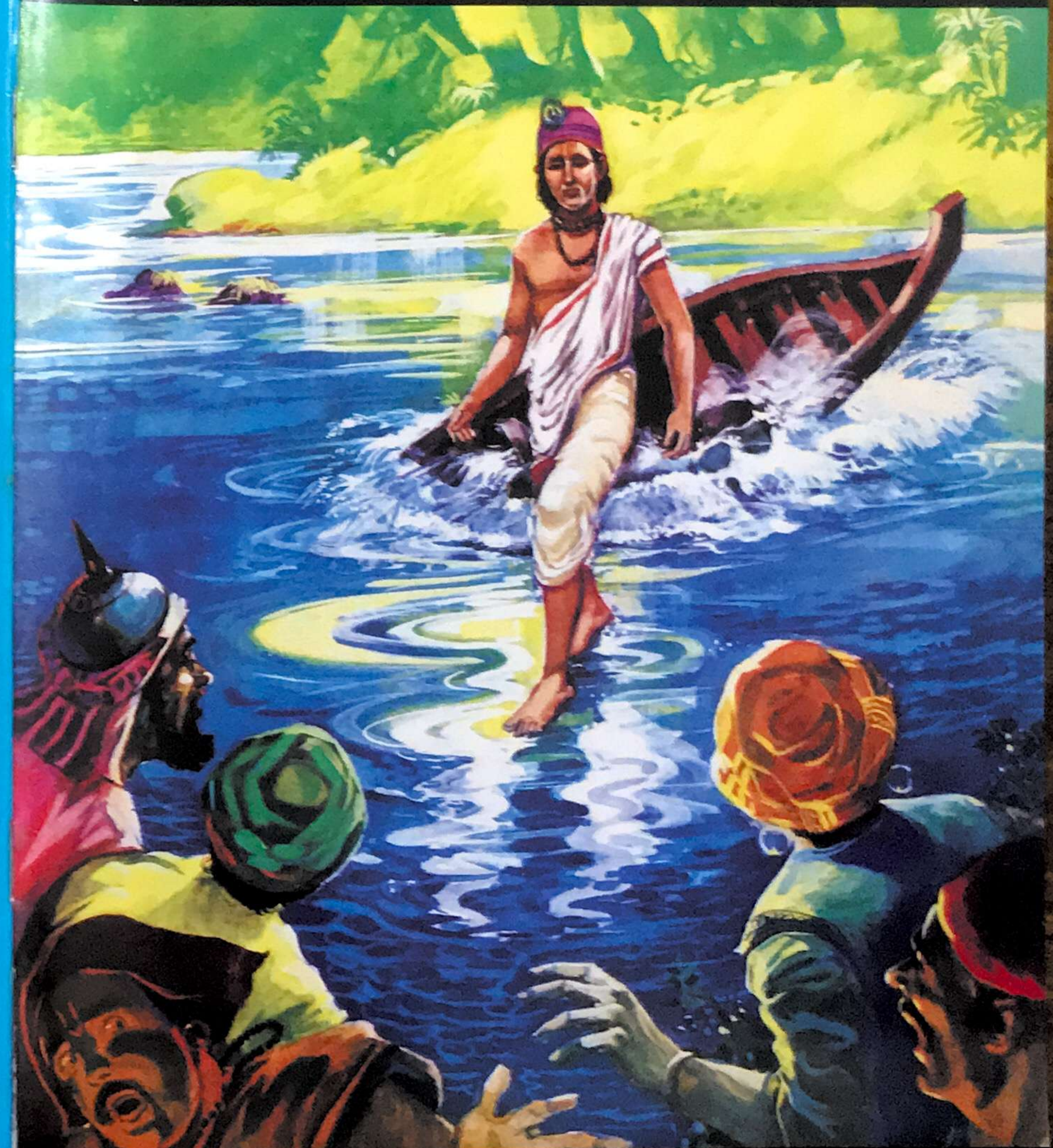
VISIONARIES



KABIR

HE SPOKE OF TOLERANCE AND MERCY

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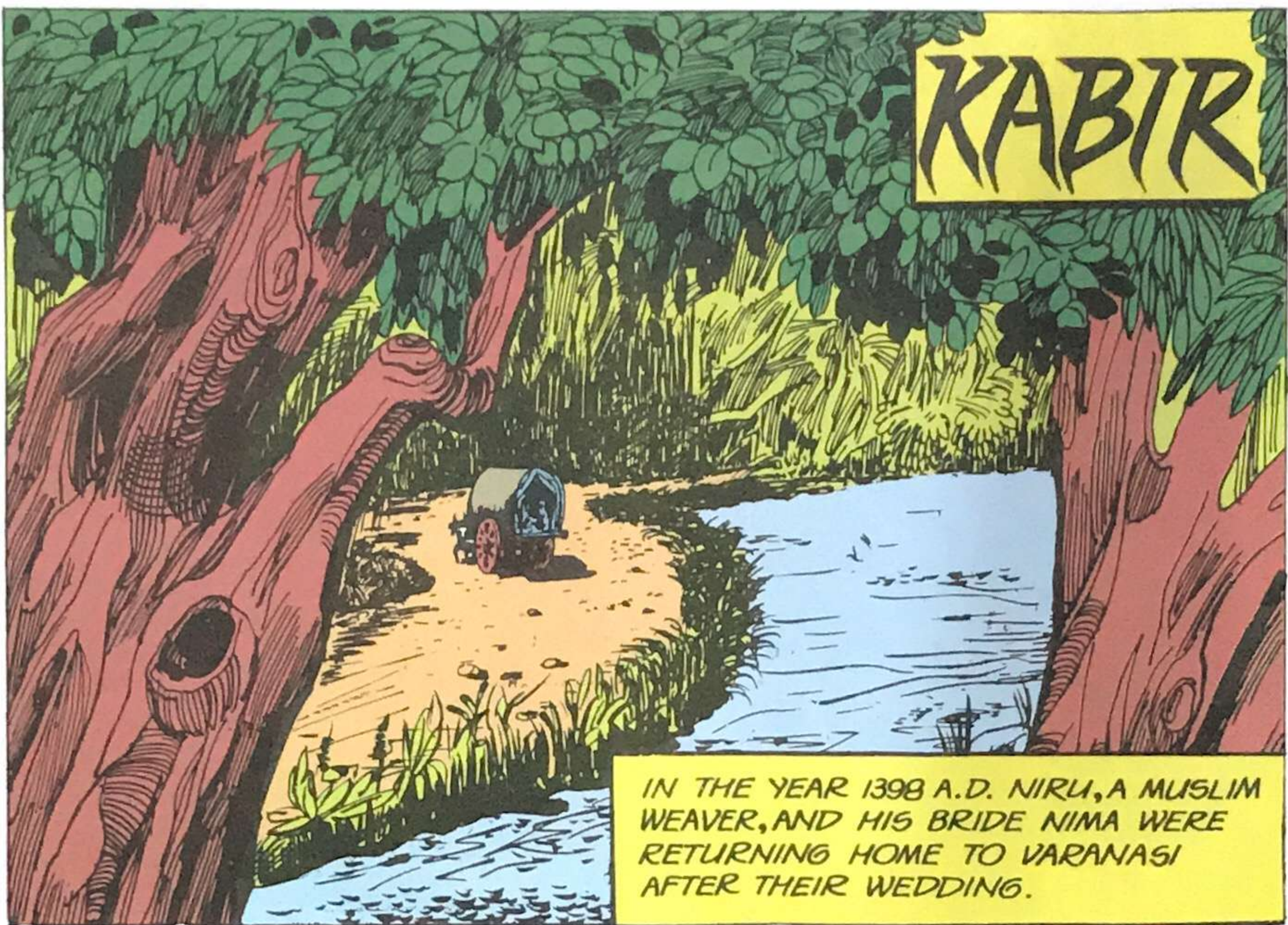


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KABIR

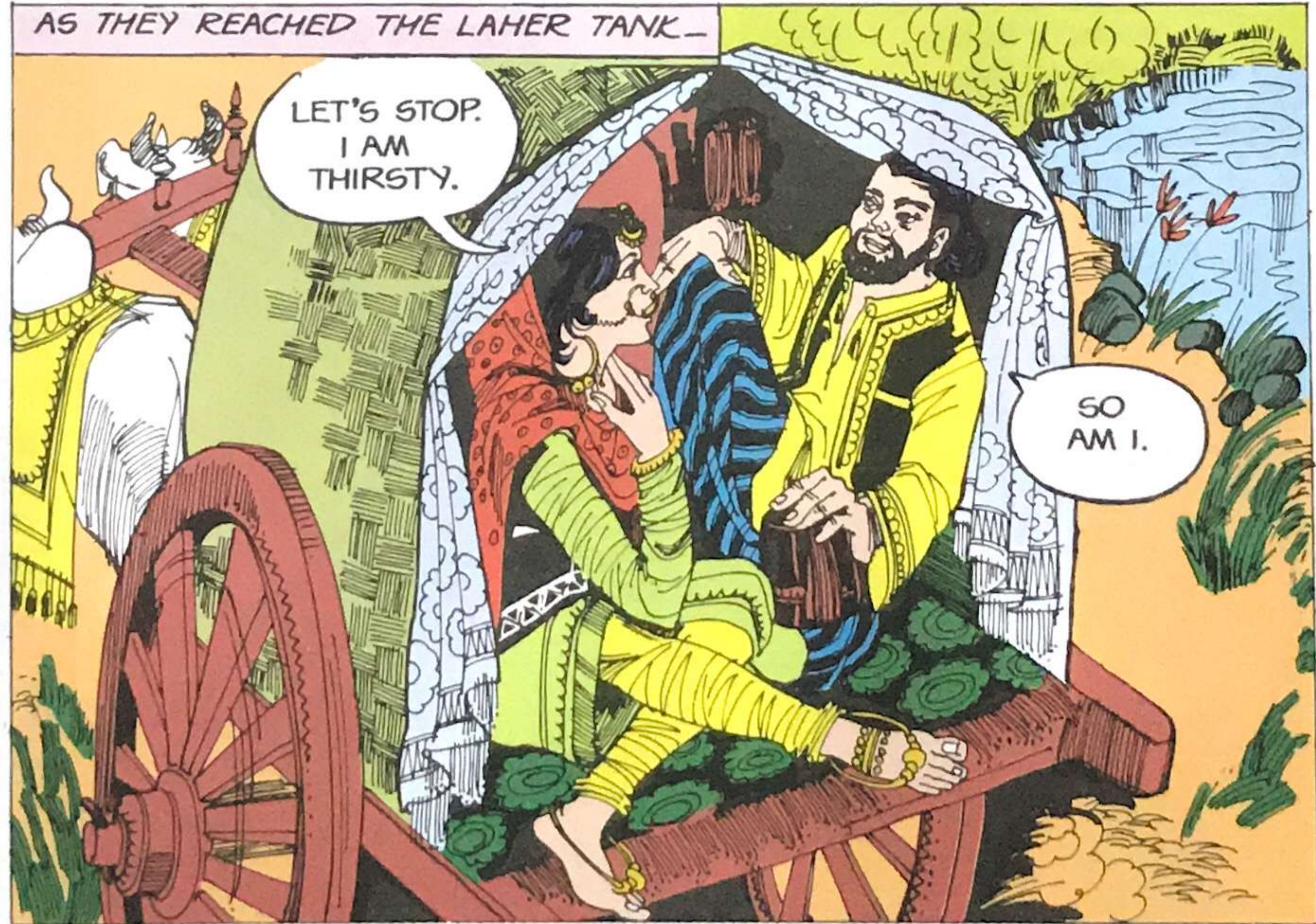


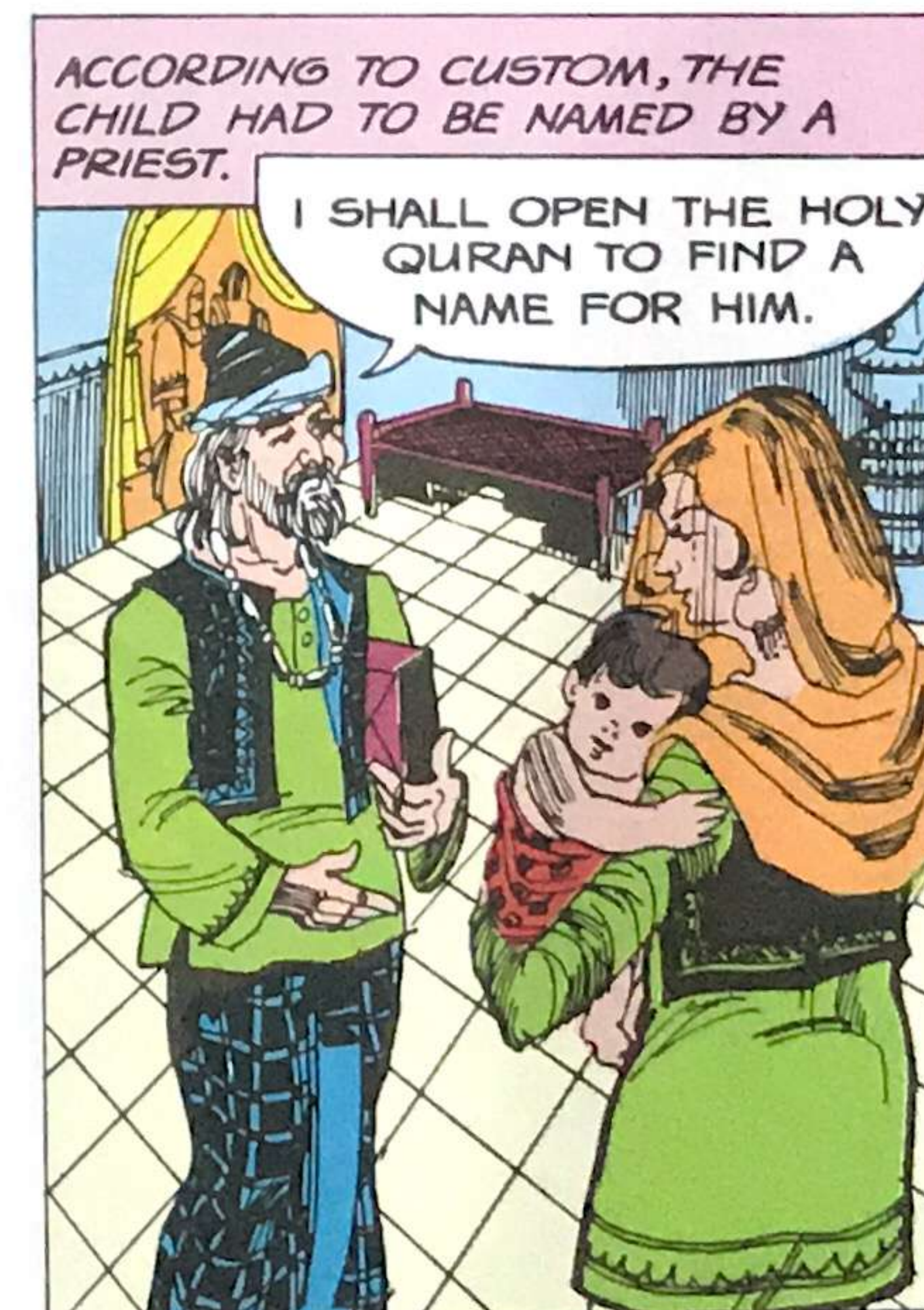
IN THE YEAR 1398 A.D. NIRU, A MUSLIM WEAVER, AND HIS BRIDE NIMA WERE RETURNING HOME TO VARANASI AFTER THEIR WEDDING.

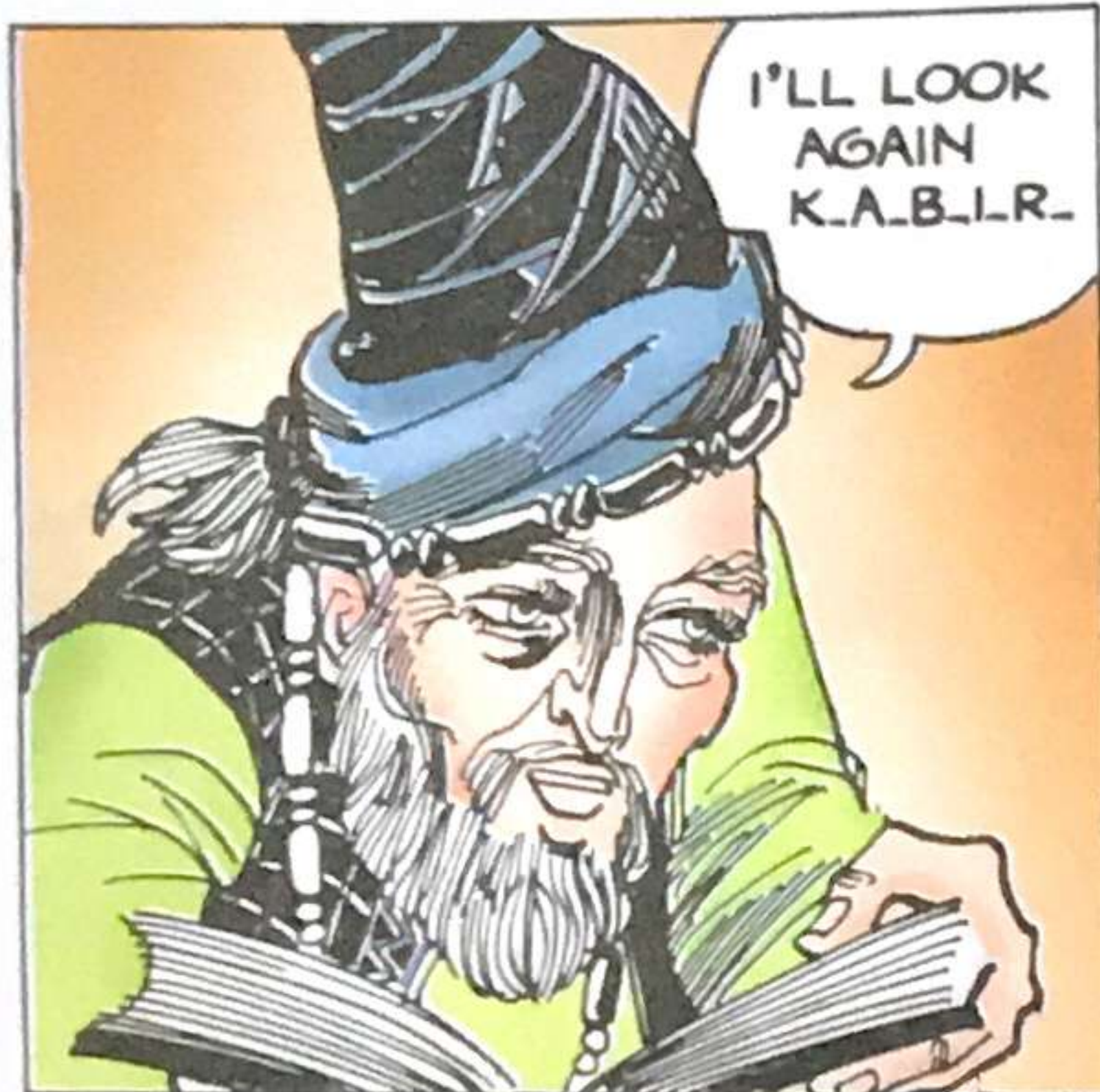
AS THEY REACHED THE LAHER TANK —

LET'S STOP.
I AM
THIRSTY.

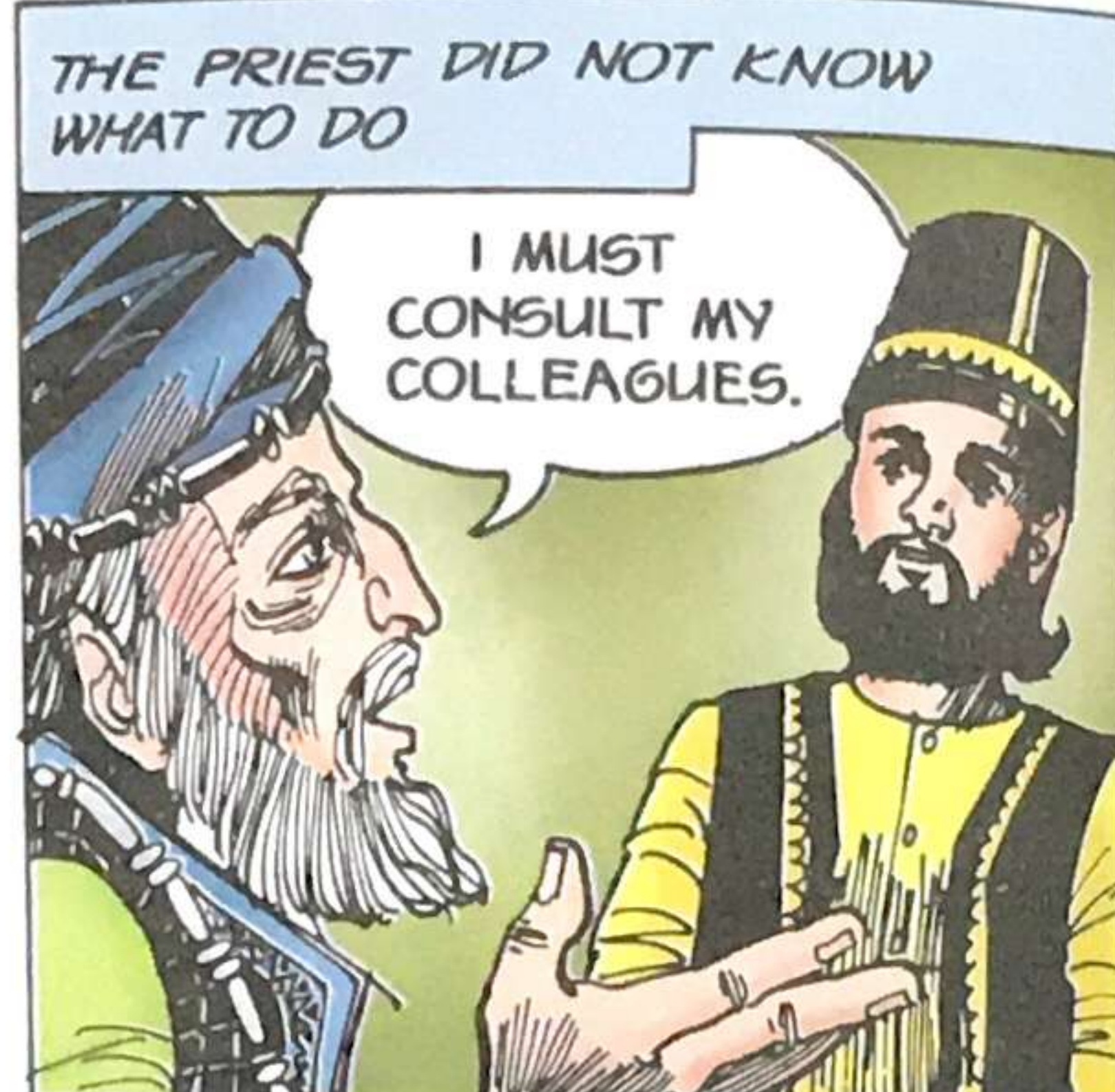
SO
AM I.







I'LL LOOK AGAIN K.A.B.I.R.



THE PRIEST DID NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO

I MUST CONSULT MY COLLEAGUES.

FOUR MORE PRIESTS WERE CALLED IN.



TO THEIR SURPRISE SEVERAL NAMES OF GOD, INCLUDING "KABIR," STARED THEM IN THEIR FACES.

OUTRAGED, THEY CALLED IN NIRU.



GOD'S NAME IS NOT FOR HIM.

THE CHILD IS EVIL. KILL HIM!



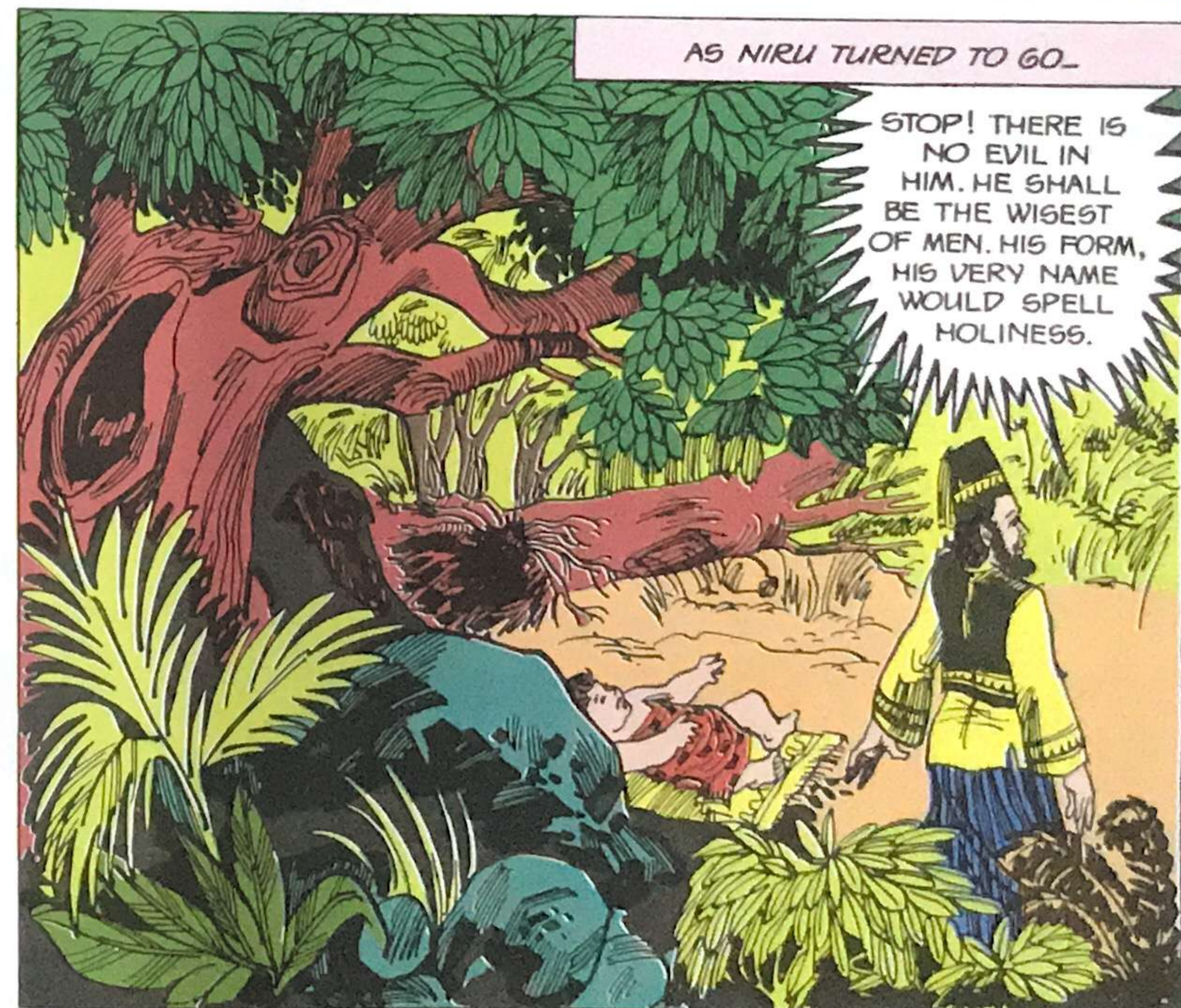
DON'T NIRU, PLEASE...

DID YOU HEAR WHAT THE PRIESTS HAD TO SAY?

NIRU TOOK THE CHILD INTO THE FOREST.

I'LL LEAVE HIM HERE. LET THE ANIMALS DO THE REST.

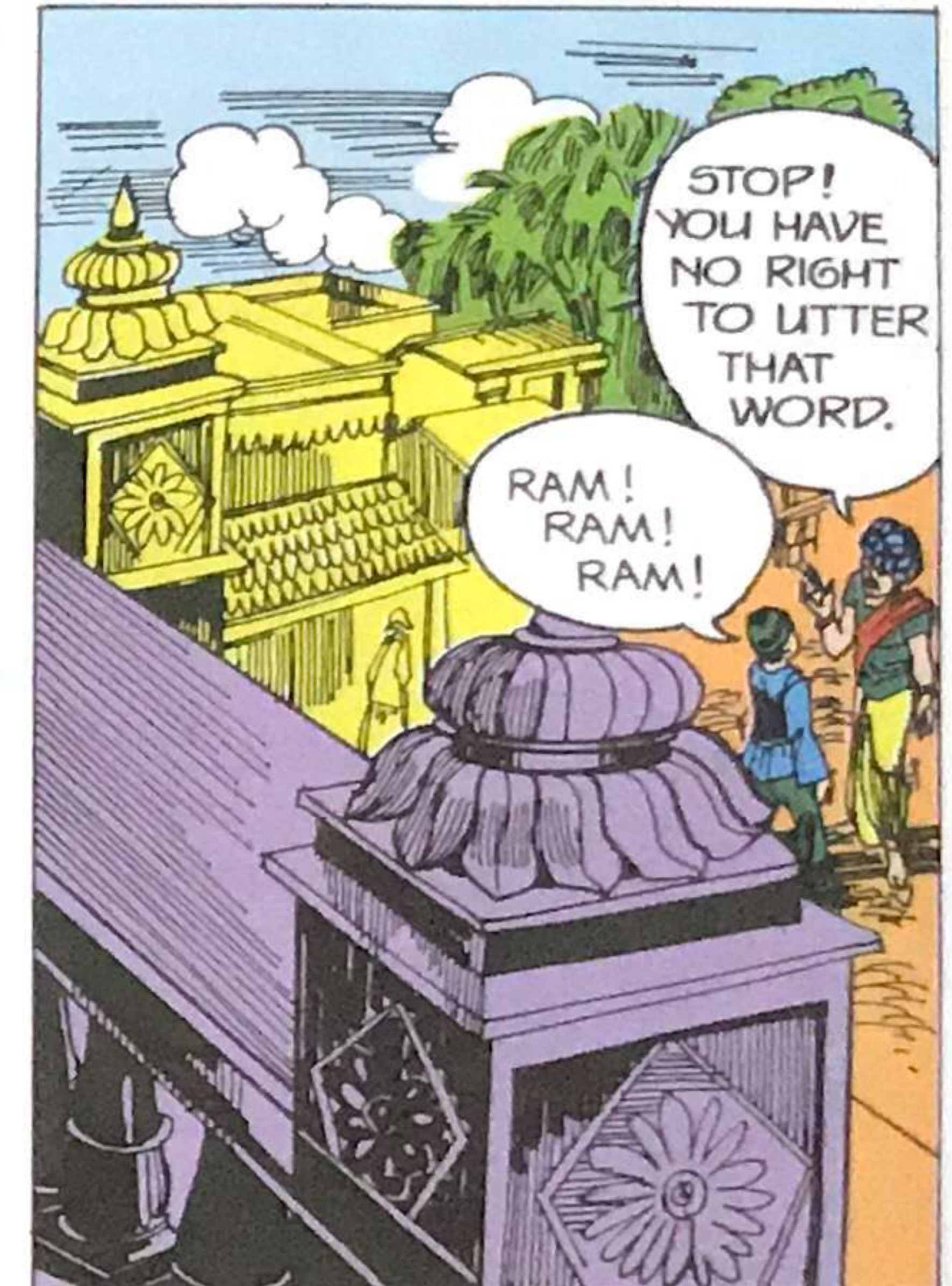
AS NIRU TURNED TO GO...



STOP! THERE IS NO EVIL IN HIM. HE SHALL BE THE WISEST OF MEN. HIS FORM, HIS VERY NAME WOULD SPELL HOLINESS.



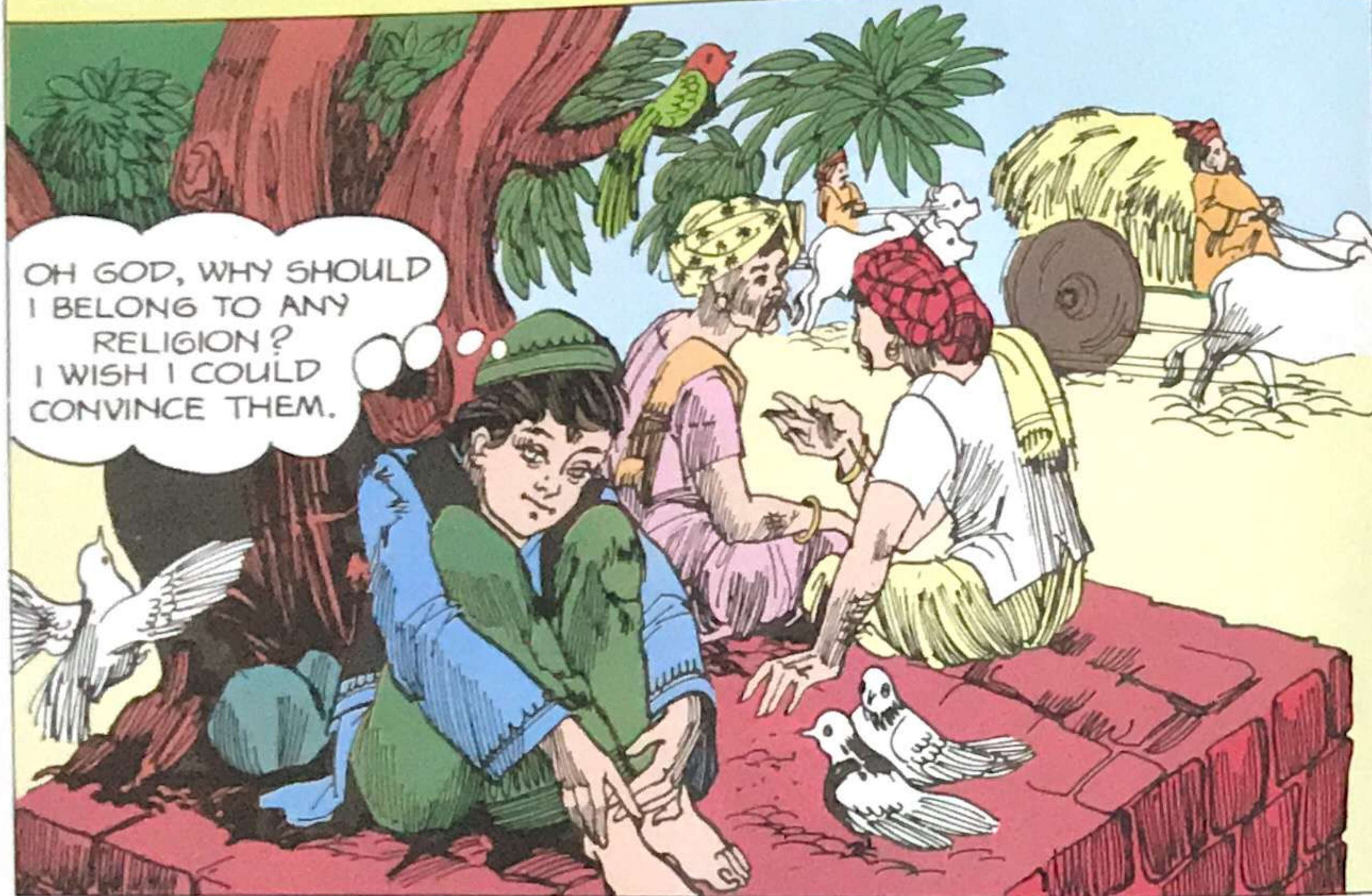
NIRU MADE UP HIS MIND TO KEEP THE BABY.



*THE LOWLY OUTCASTE.



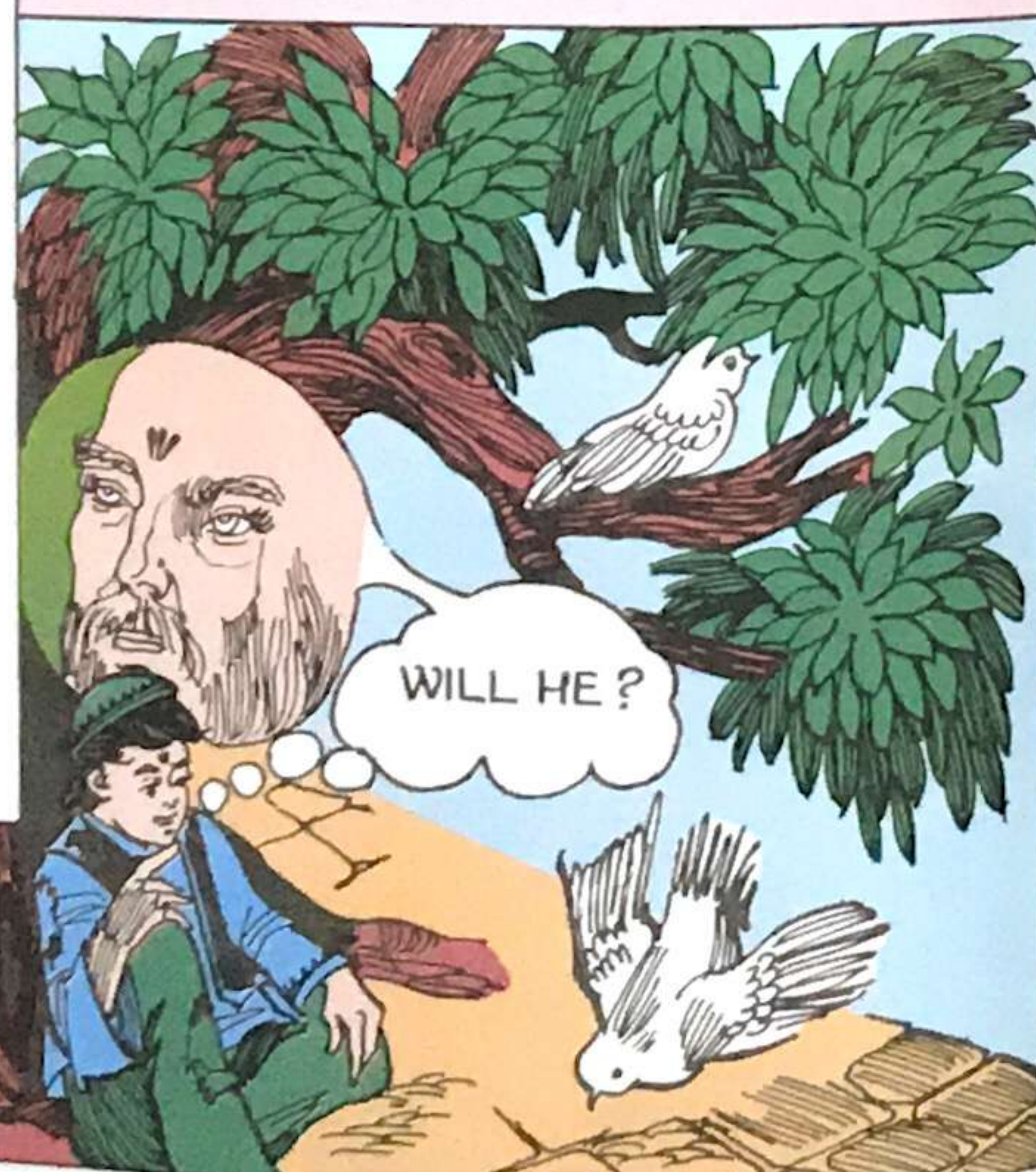
SUCH TREATMENT MADE NO DIFFERENCE TO KABIR'S VIEWS.



KABIR WANTED A SPIRITUAL GUIDE.



THE TROUBLED KABIR THOUGHT OF SWAMI RAMANAND, A GREAT VAISHNAVA SAINT.



AT RAMANAND'S PLACE...



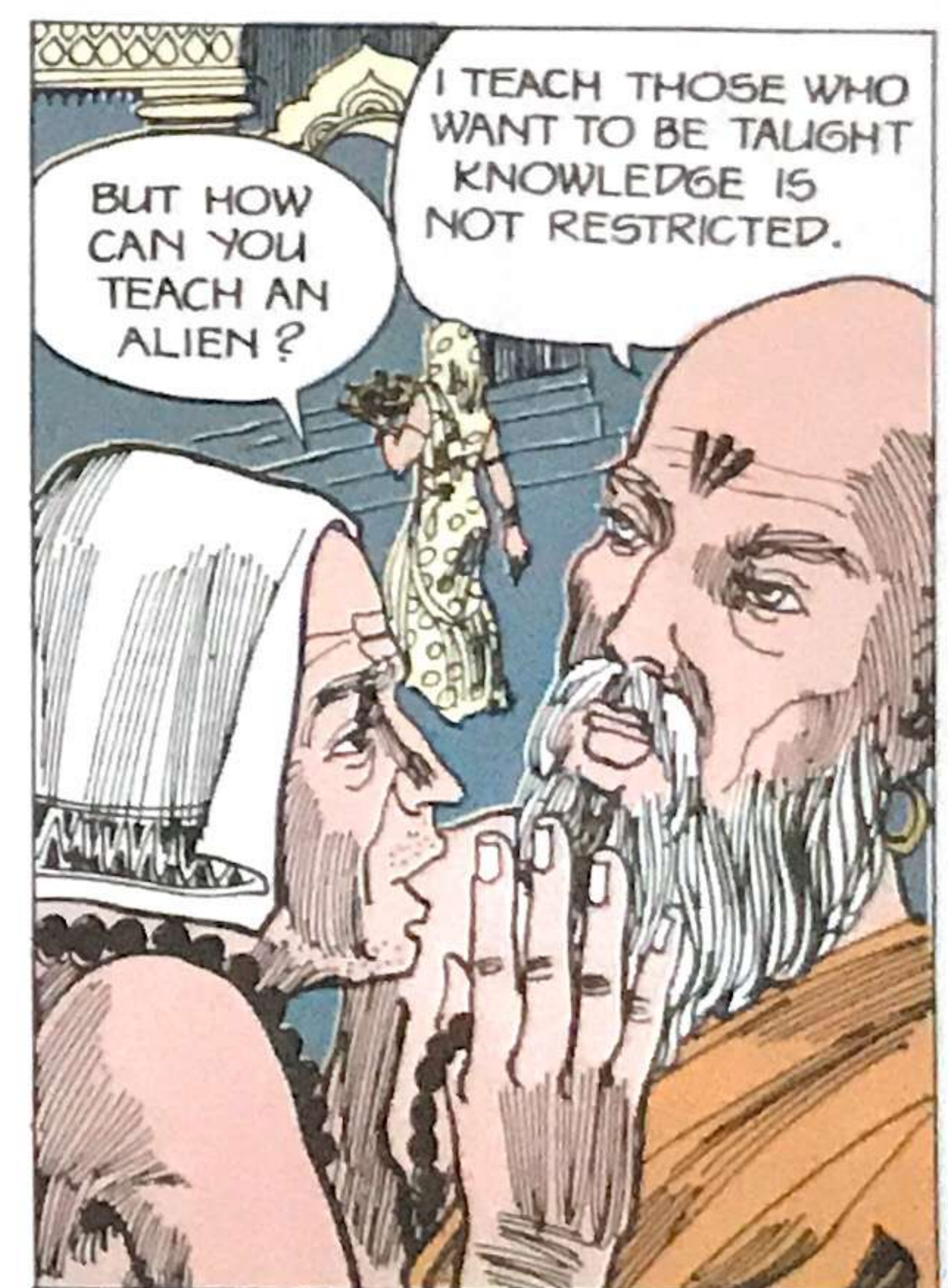
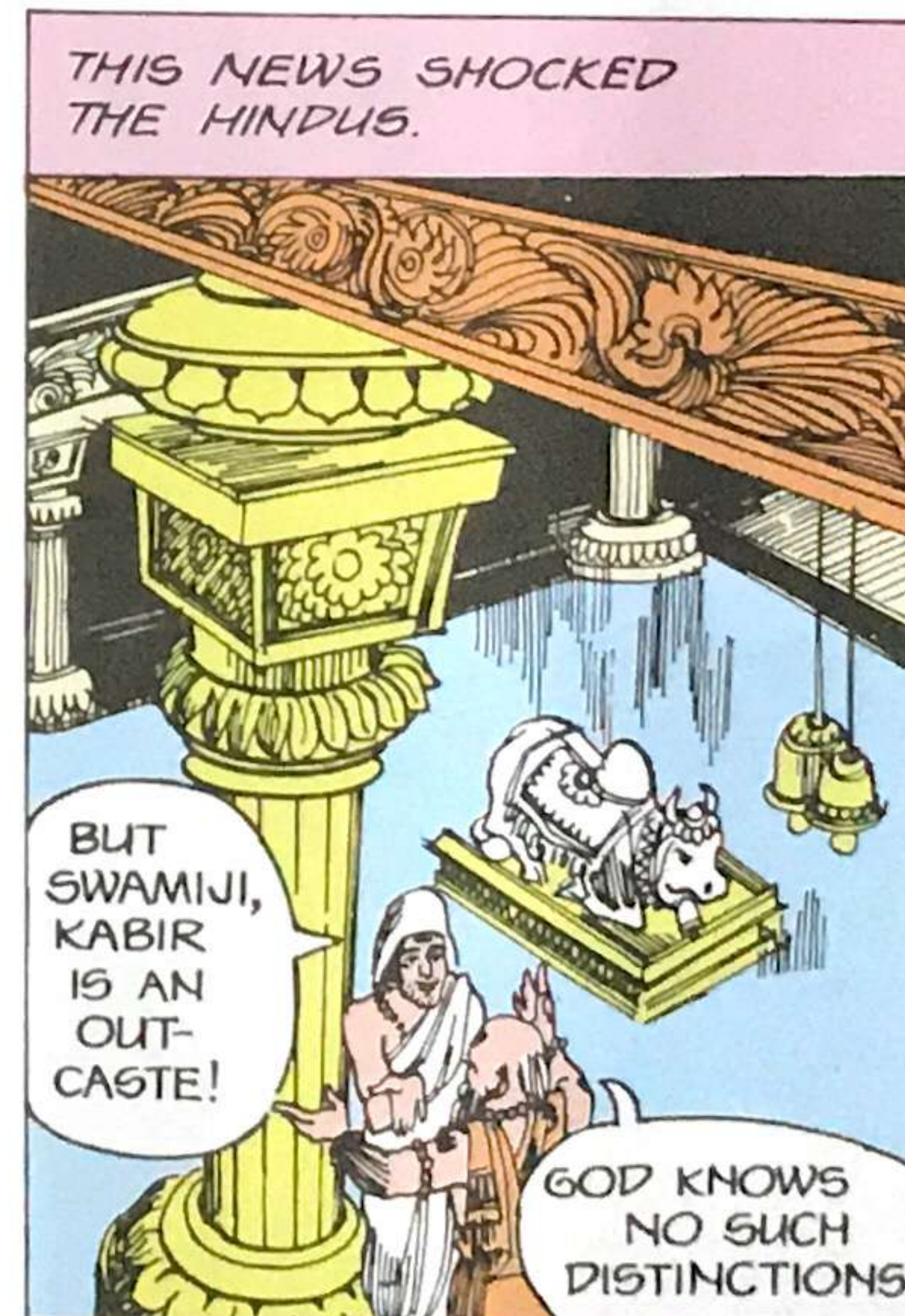
KABIR

KABIR DID NOT GIVE UP.

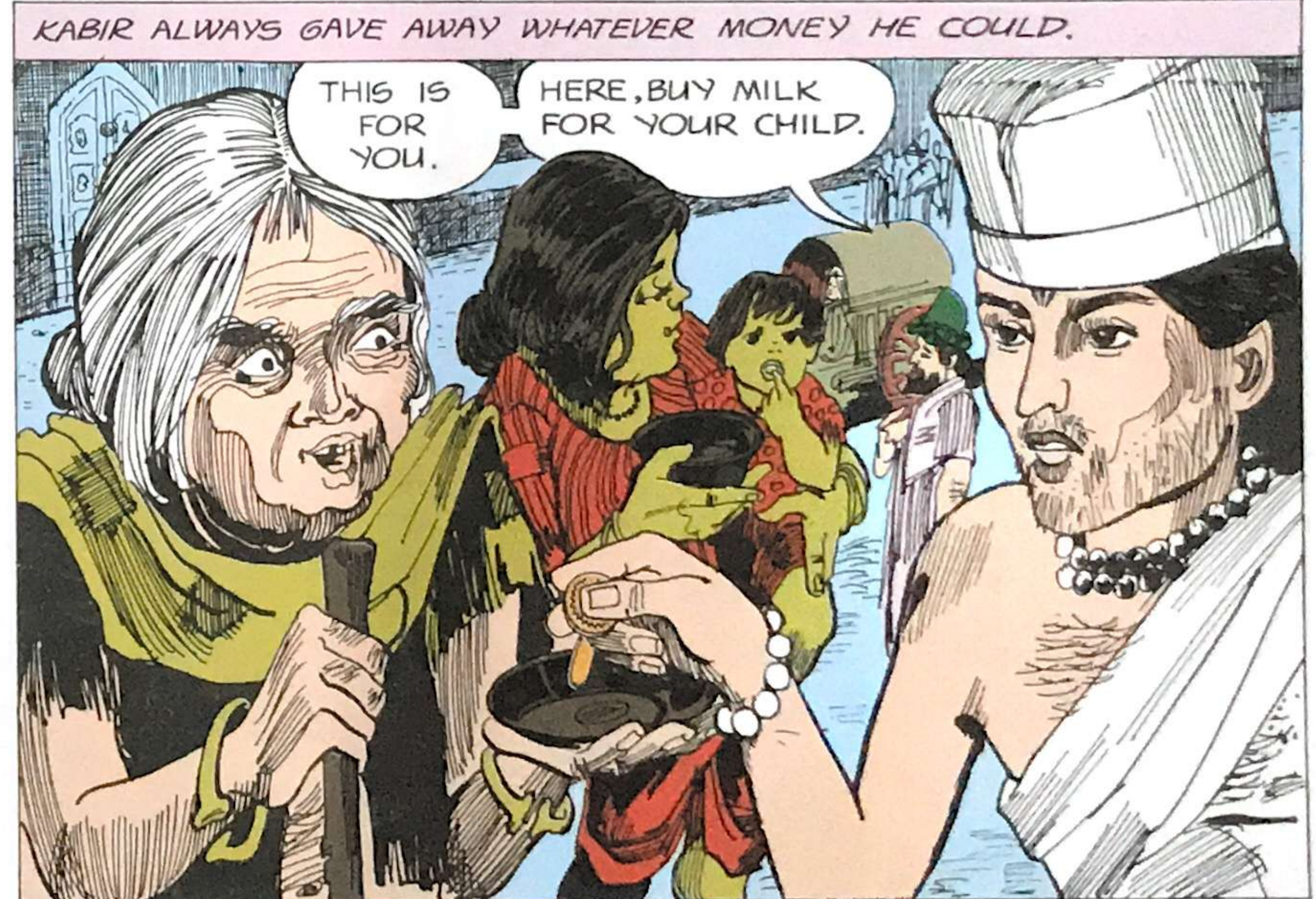
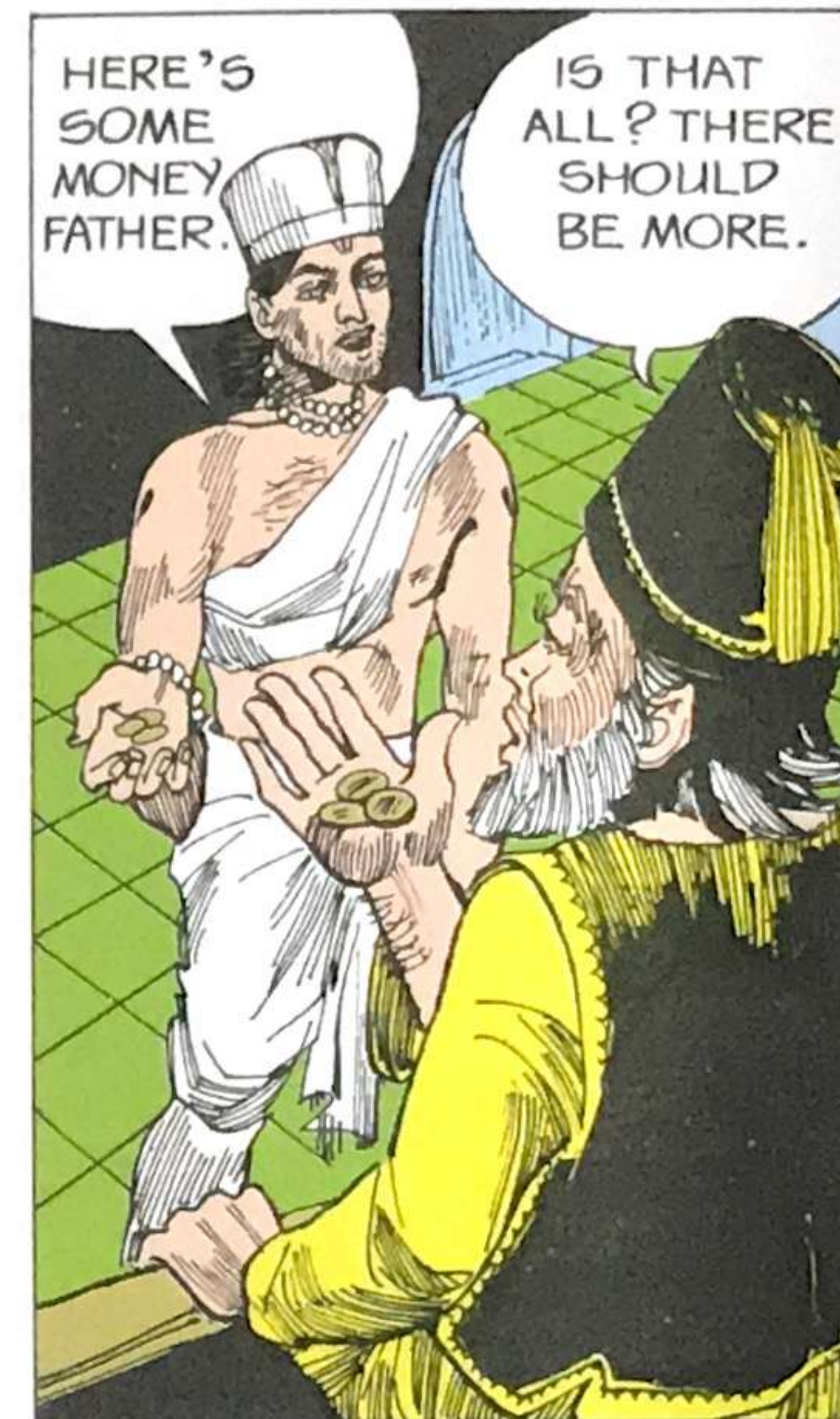
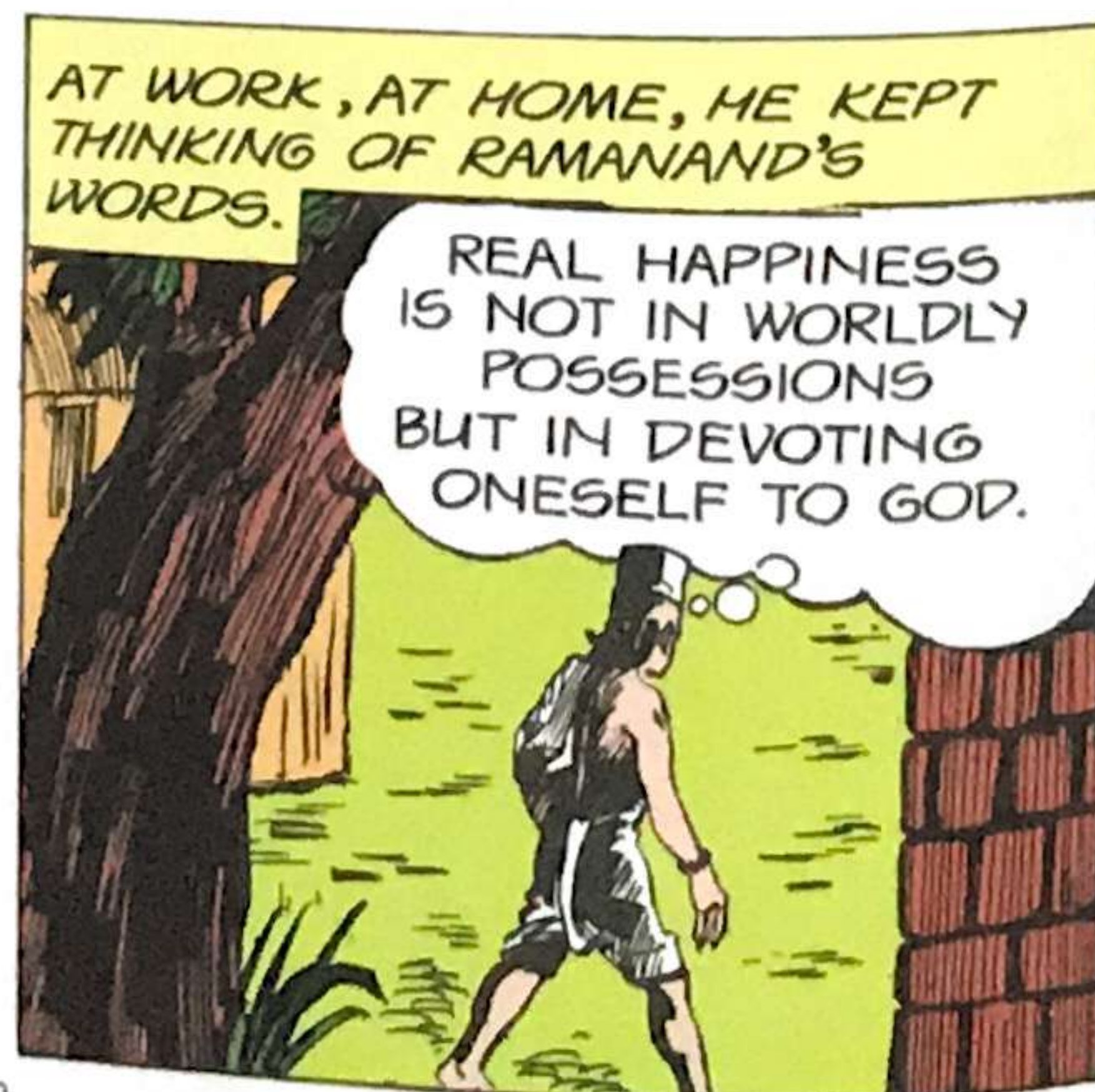
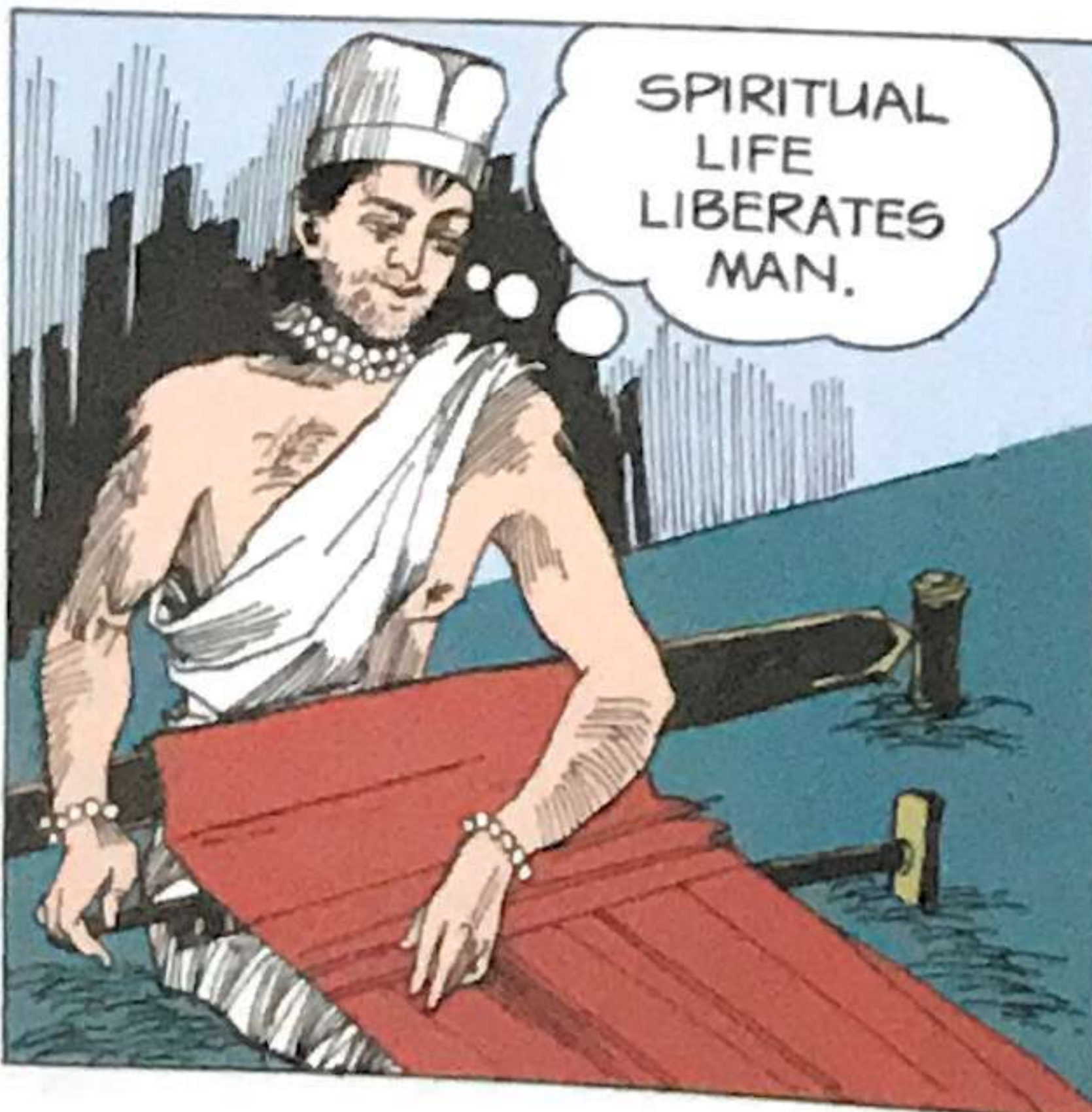
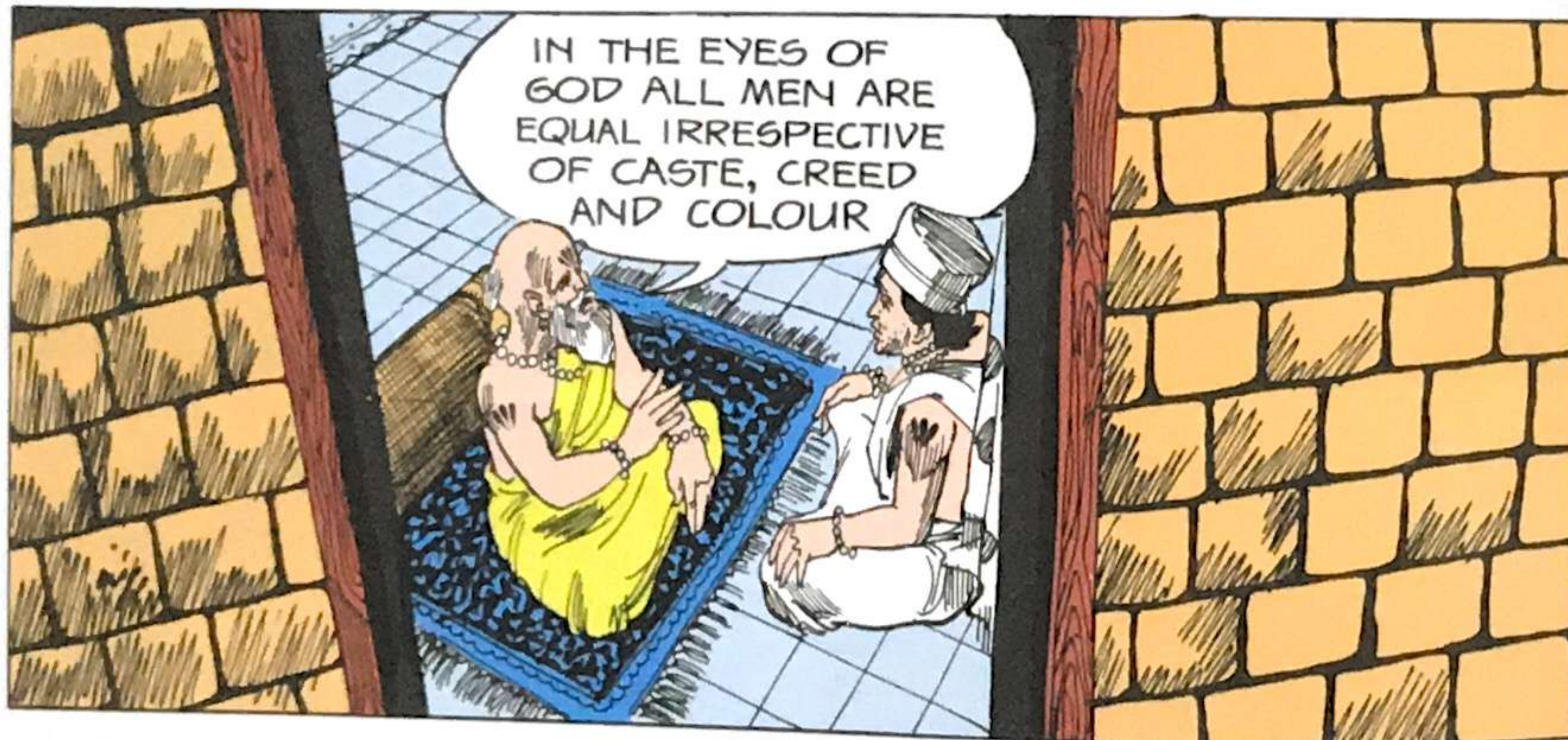
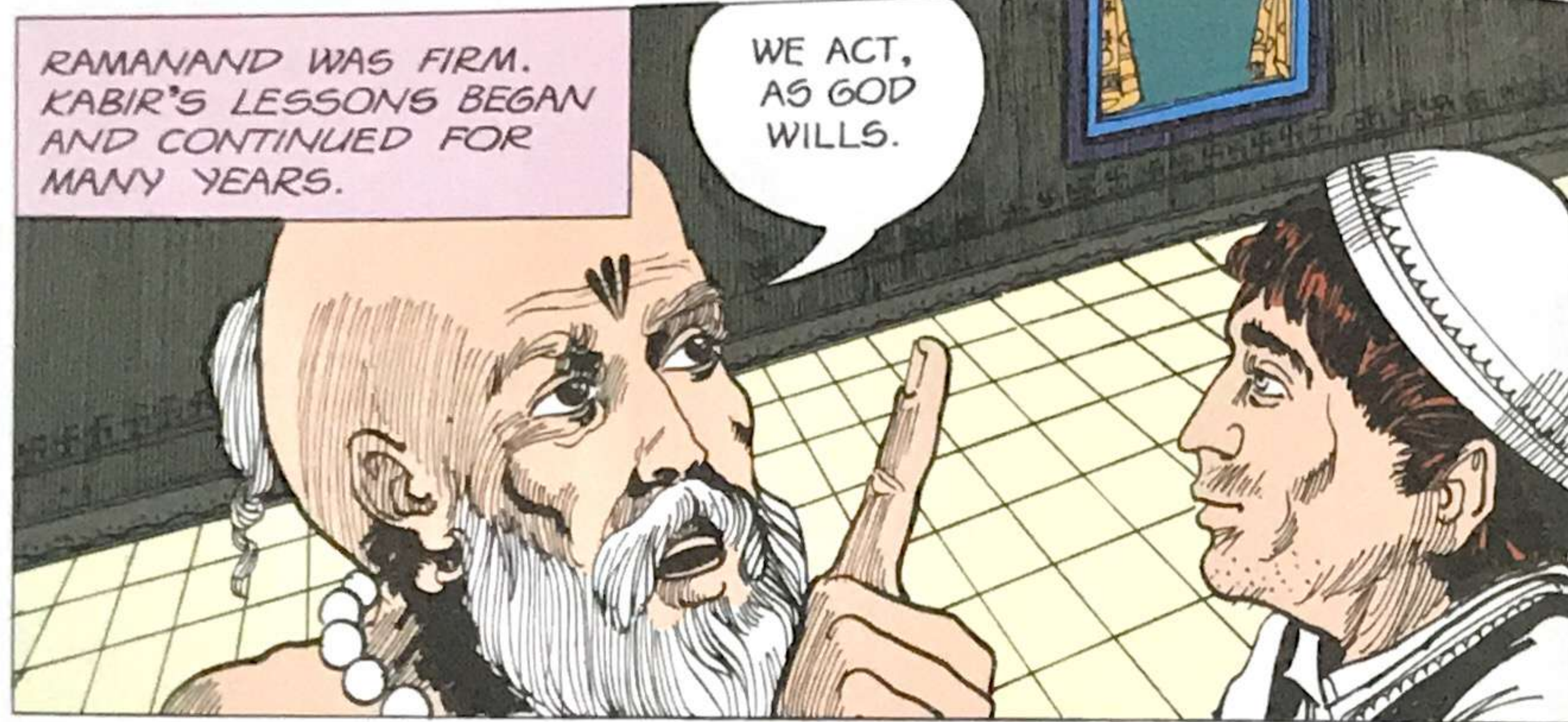


EARLY ONE MORNING...



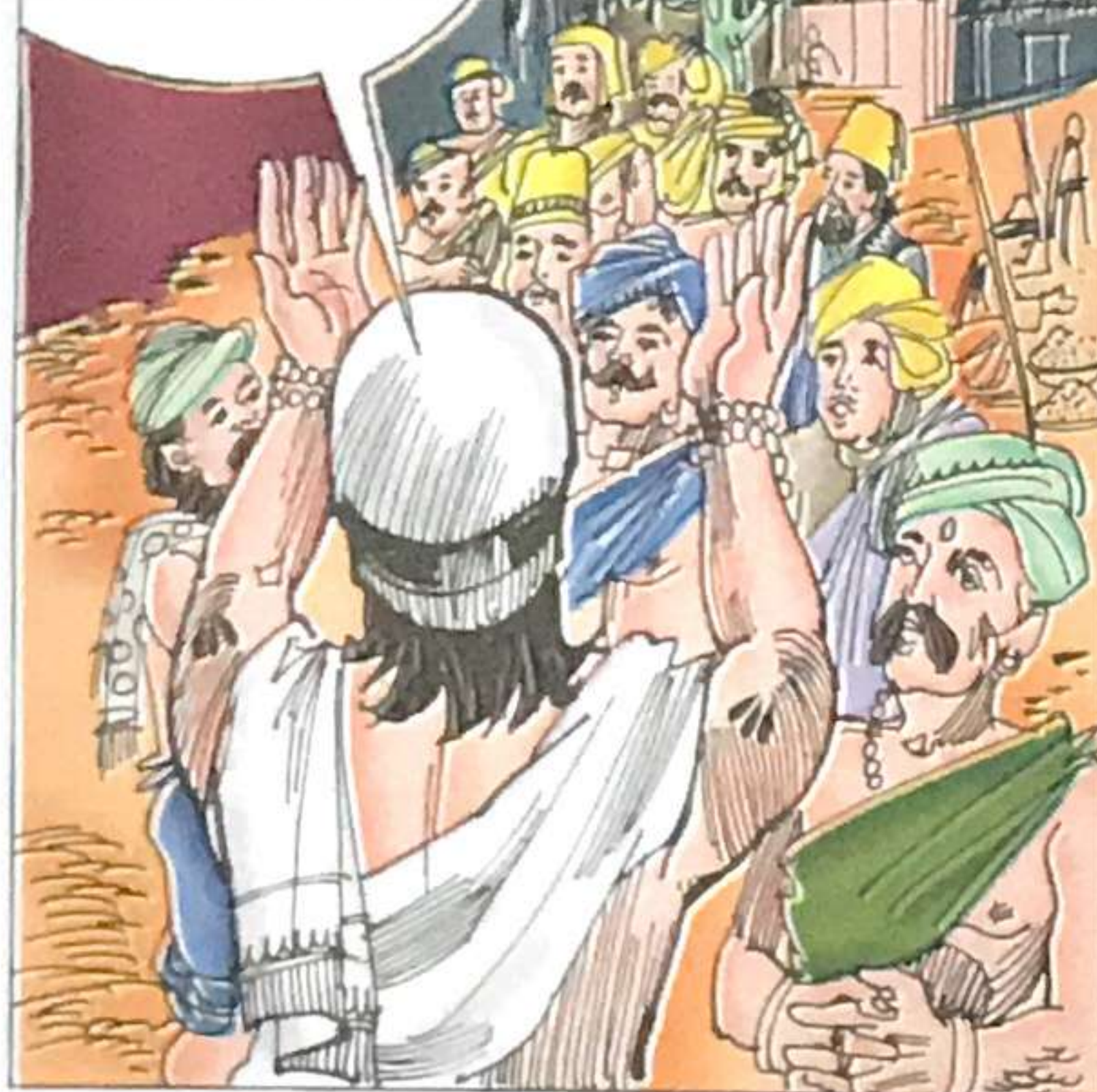


GOD KNOWS NO SUCH DISTINCTIONS.



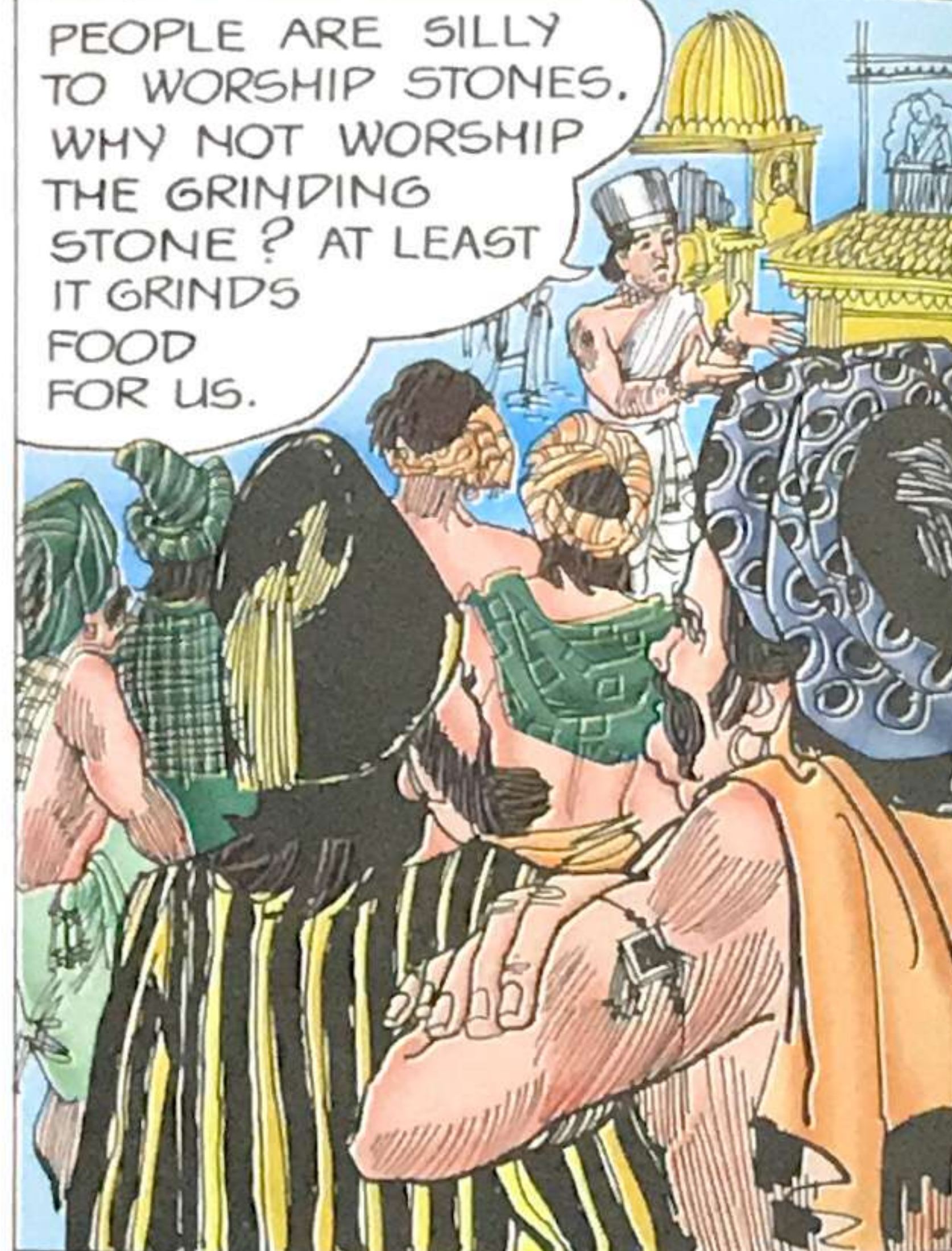
IT PAINED THE GOOD MAN TO SEE RELIGION, CASTE AND CREED KEEPING PEOPLE APART.

LET PEOPLE WORSHIP GOD ACCORDING TO THEIR CONVICTIONS.



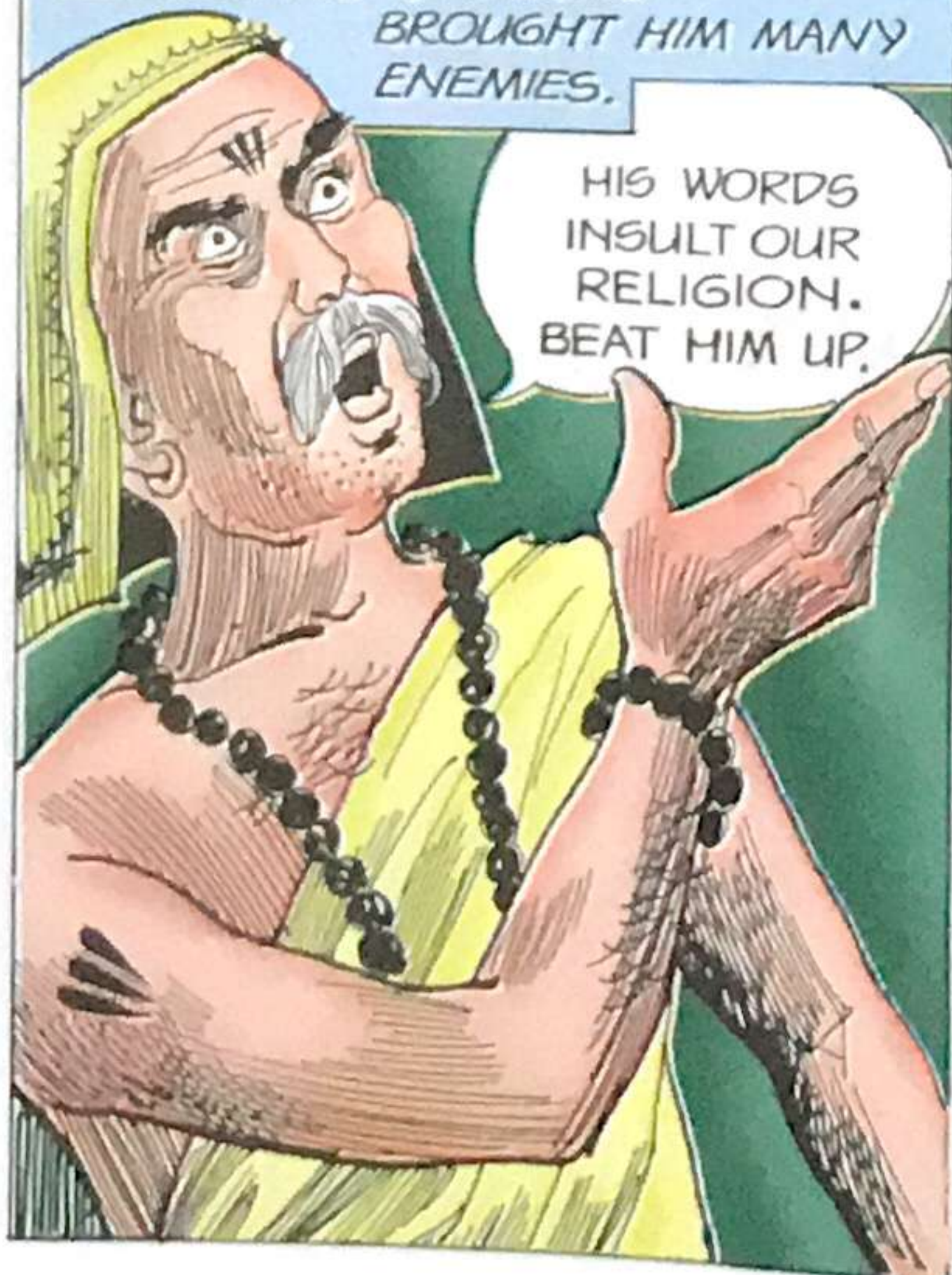
HE SHUNNED IDOL-WORSHIP.

PEOPLE ARE SILLY TO WORSHIP STONES. WHY NOT WORSHIP THE GRINDING STONE? AT LEAST IT GRINDS FOOD FOR US.



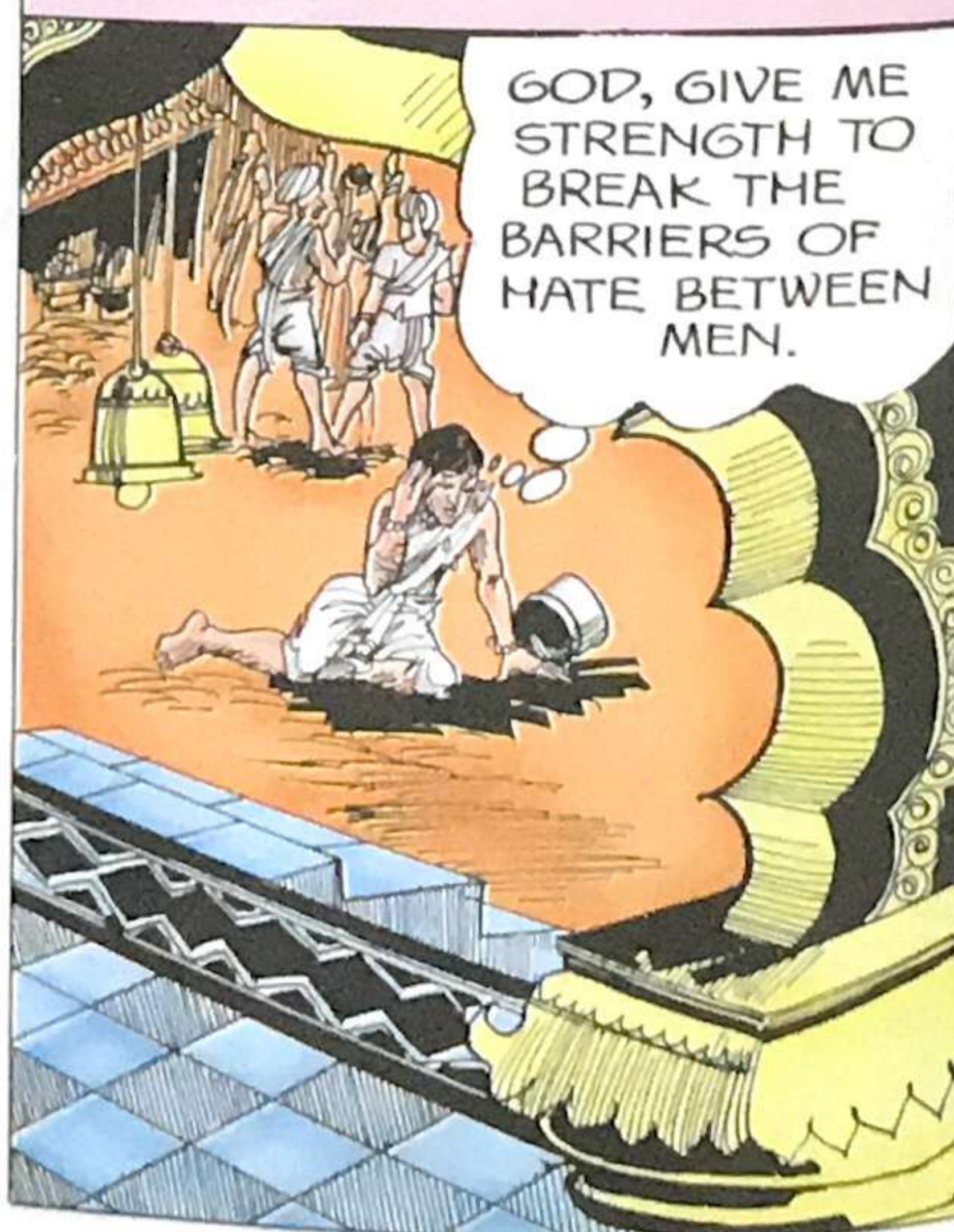
HIS FRANKNESS AND UNCONVENTIONAL OPINIONS BROUGHT HIM MANY ENEMIES.

HIS WORDS INSULT OUR RELIGION. BEAT HIM UP.



AT SUCH TIMES OF TRIAL, HE TURNED TO GOD.

GOD, GIVE ME STRENGTH TO BREAK THE BARRIERS OF HATE BETWEEN MEN.

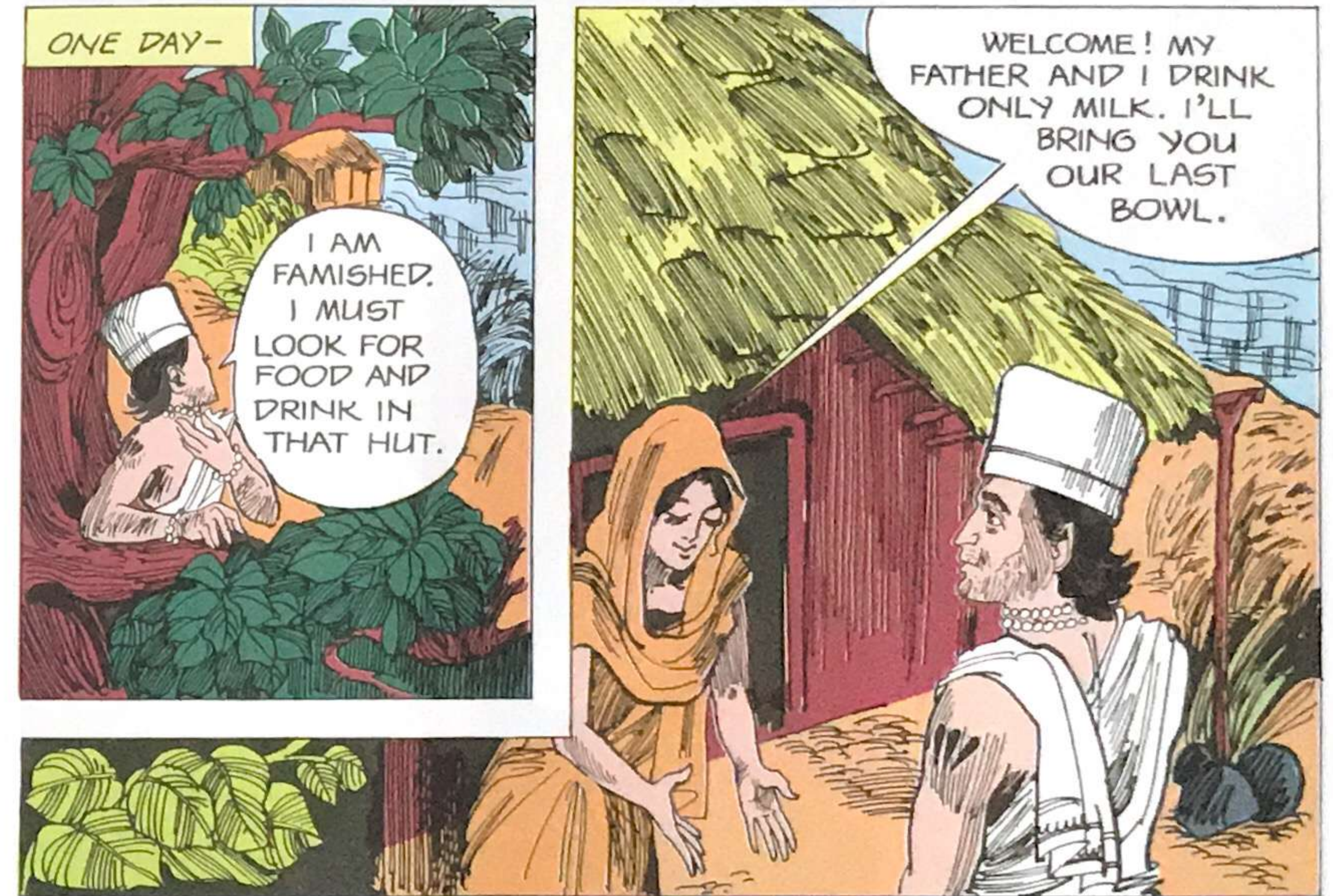


ONE DAY-

I AM FAMISHED. I MUST LOOK FOR FOOD AND DRINK IN THAT HUT.



WELCOME! MY FATHER AND I DRINK ONLY MILK. I'LL BRING YOU OUR LAST BOWL.

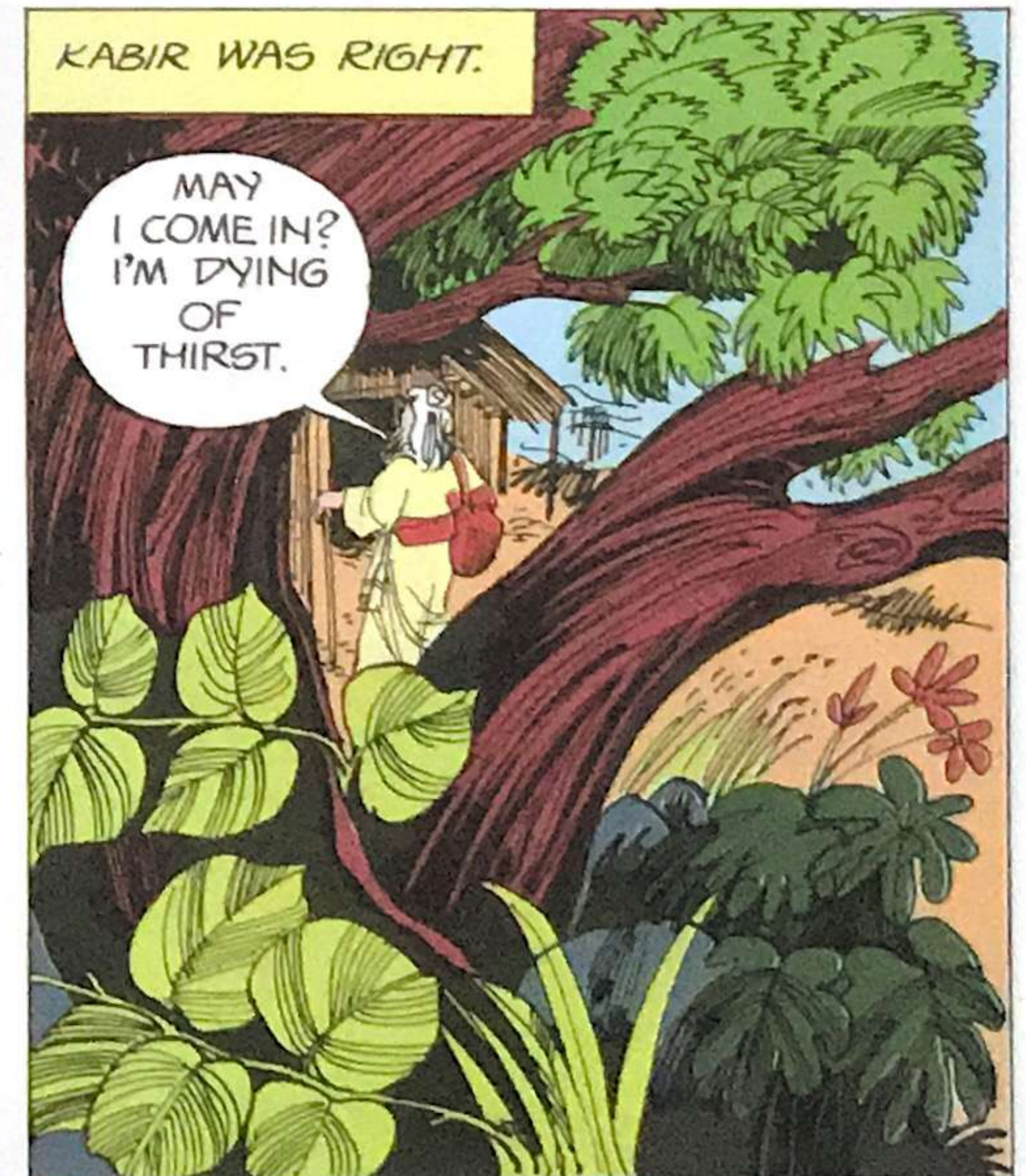


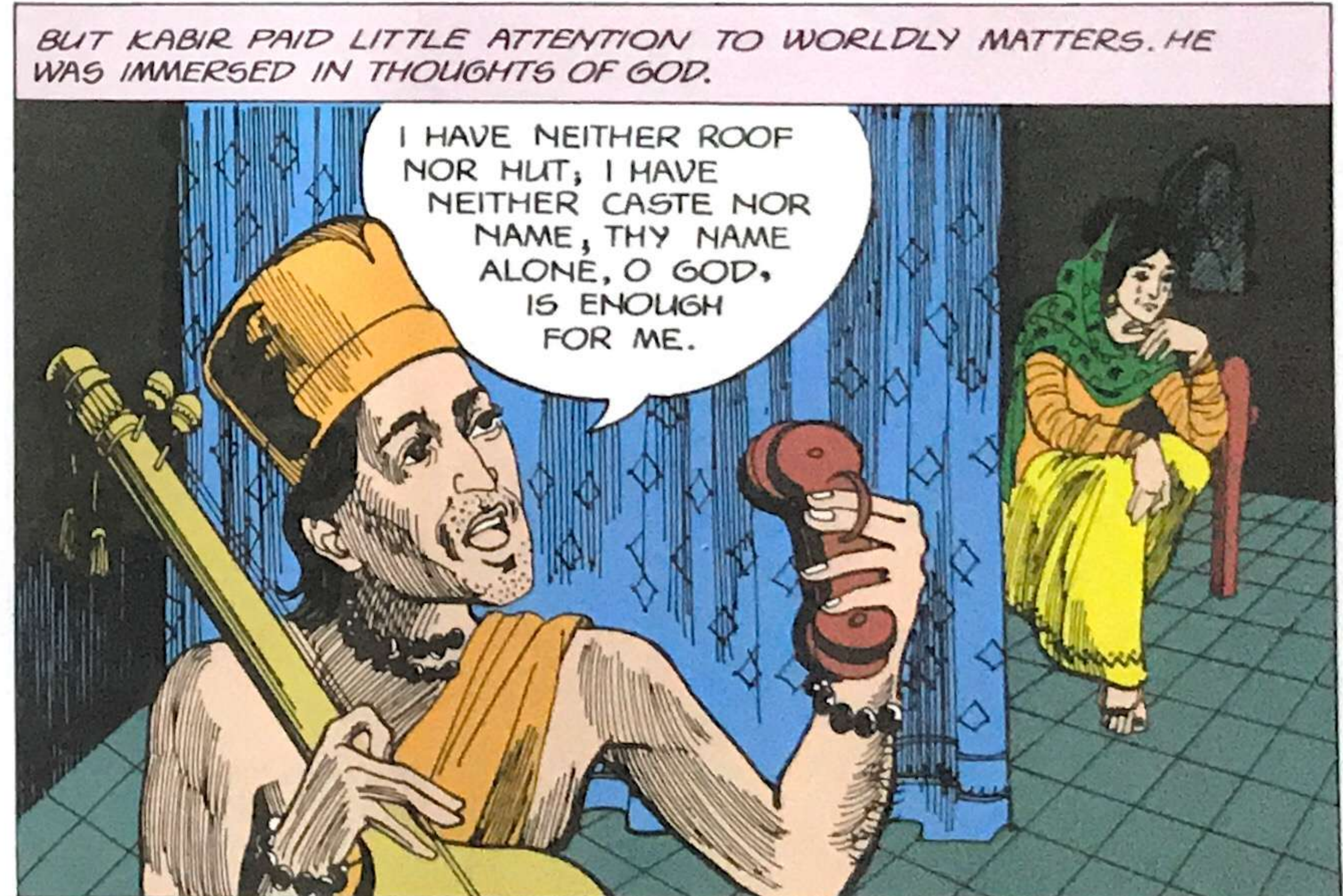
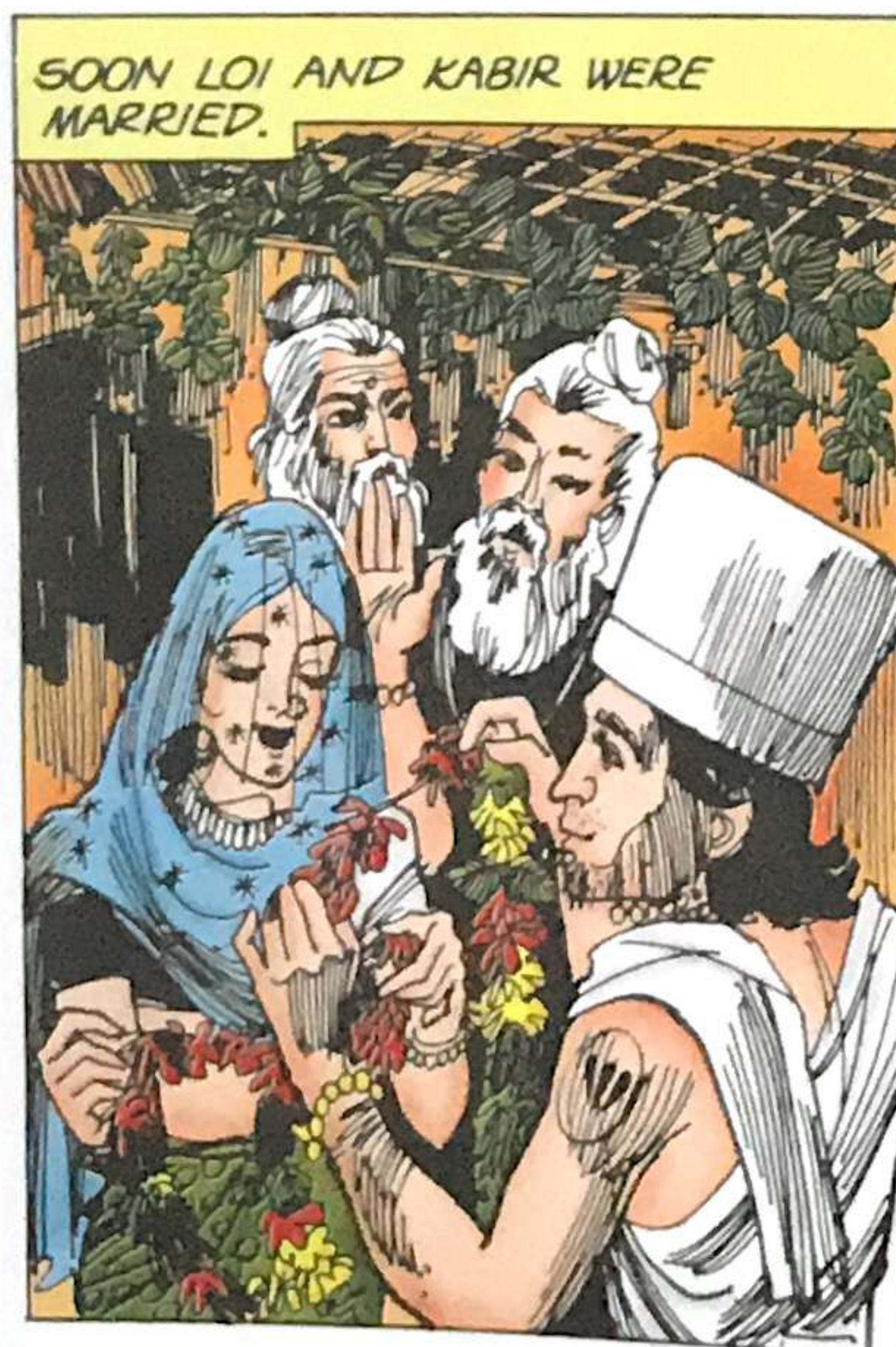
HERE, DRINK THIS. ANOTHER THIRSTY HERMIT IS ON HIS WAY. KEEP IT FOR HIM.



KABIR WAS RIGHT.

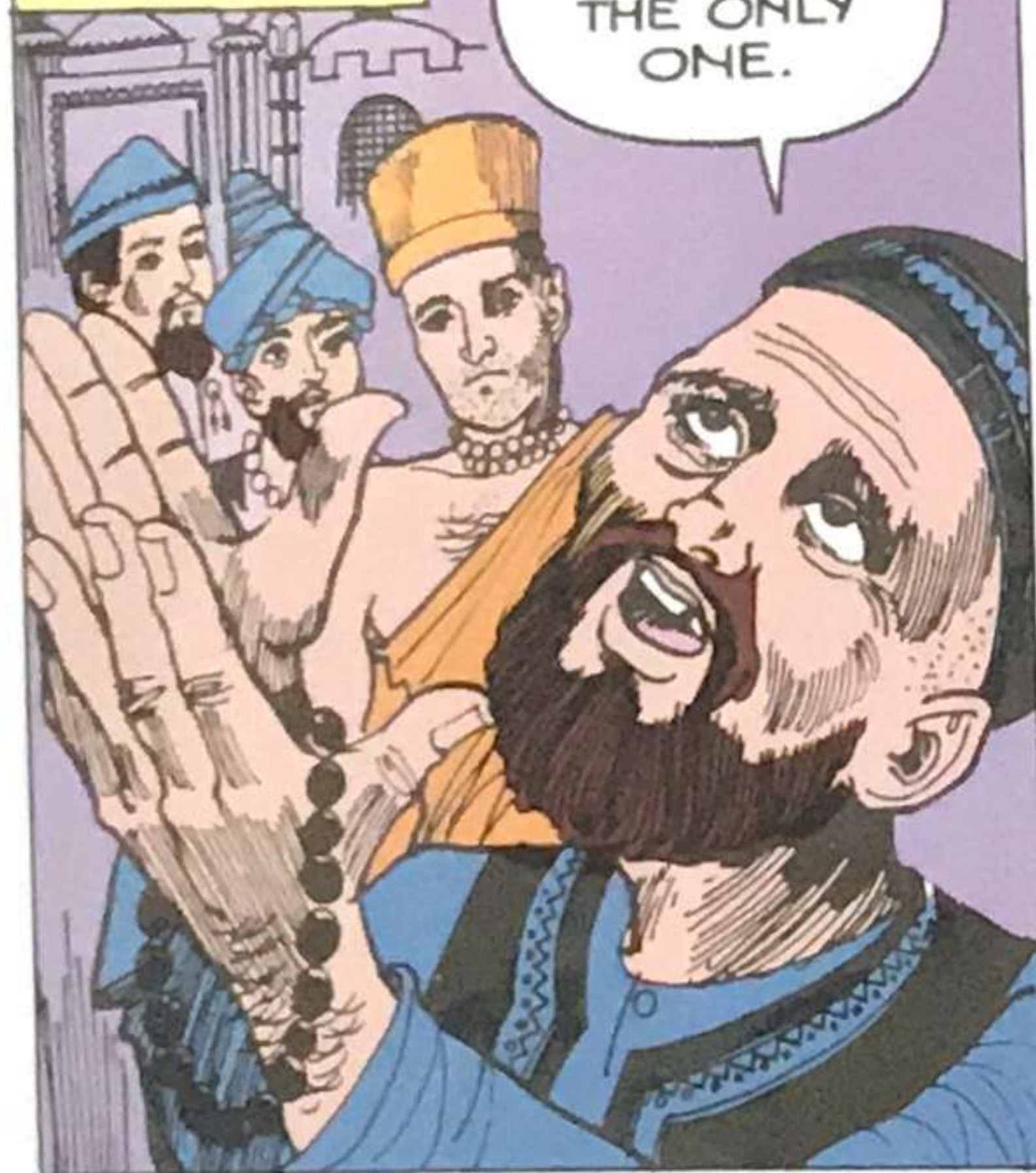
MAY I COME IN? I'M DYING OF THIRST.





SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE GAVE KABIR PEACE. HE WENT AMONG THE MUSLIM PREACHERS...

ALLAH IS THE ONLY ONE.



...AS AMONG THE HINDU SAGES.

DEVOTION TO GOD BRINGS HAPPINESS.



KABIR WAS ACCUSED OF BEING A HERETIC.

IN THE NAME OF THE KING, WE ARREST YOU.



IN THE COURT OF THE GREAT EMPEROR, SIKANDAR LODI...

BOW TO THE KING.

I BOW ONLY TO GOD; I FEAR NEITHER KING NOR CROWN.



THIS GAVE HIM A BAD NAME.

HE POLLUTES OUR RELIGION, BY MIXING WITH THE OTHERS.



AN INFIDEL HAS NO PLACE AMONG US.



HE IS IMMORAL.

WICKED?

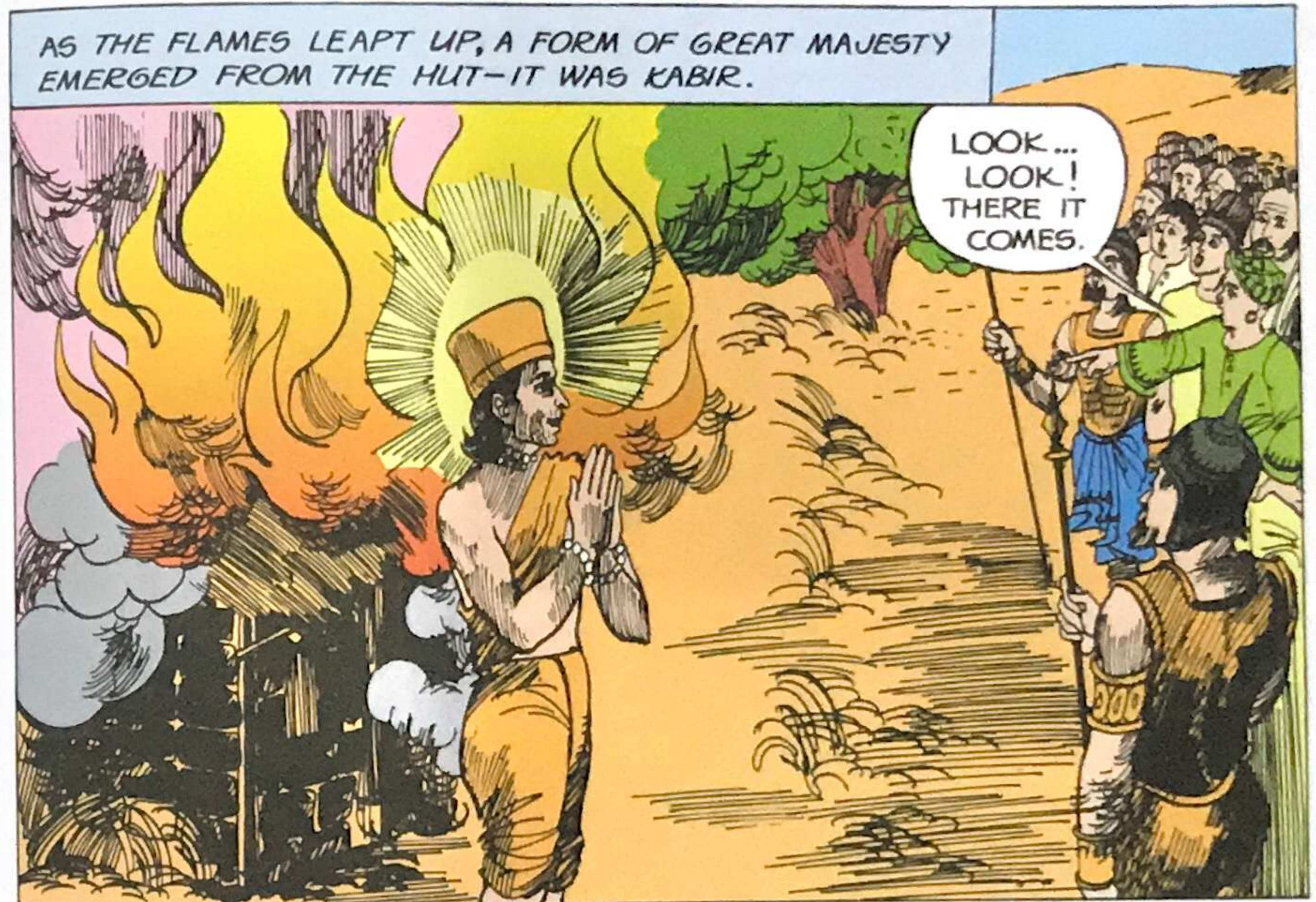
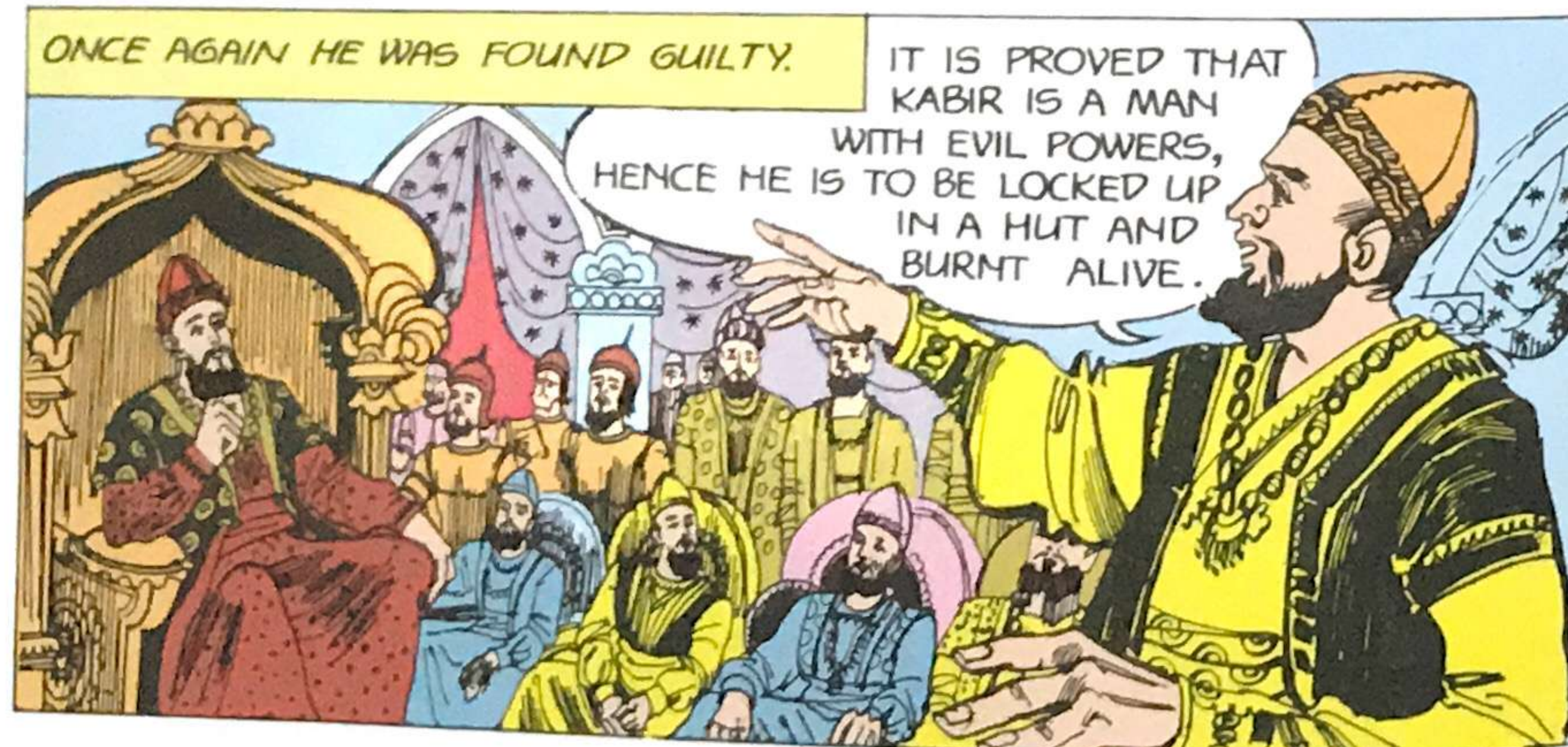
SINFUL.

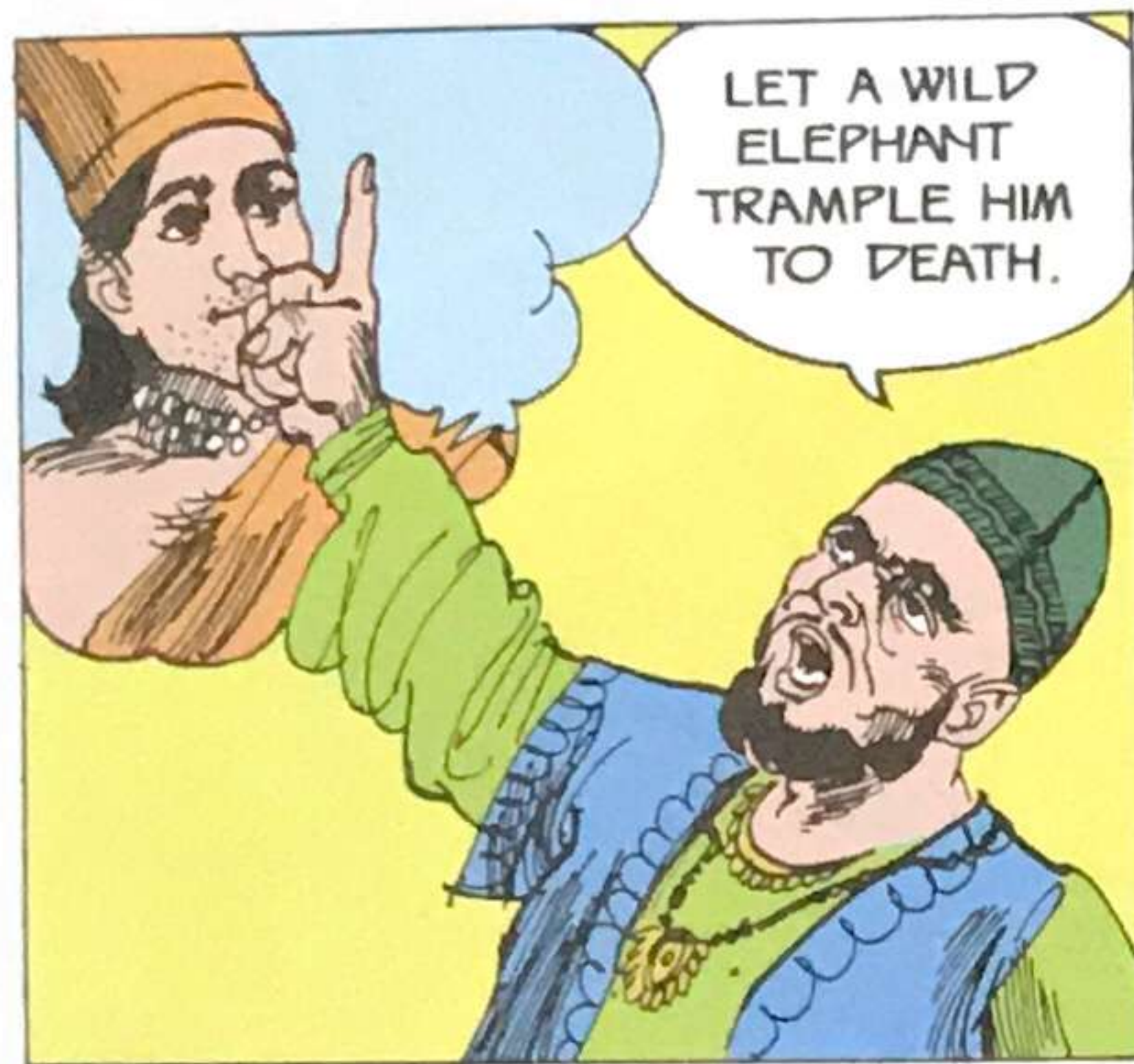


THE KING WAS FURIOUS.

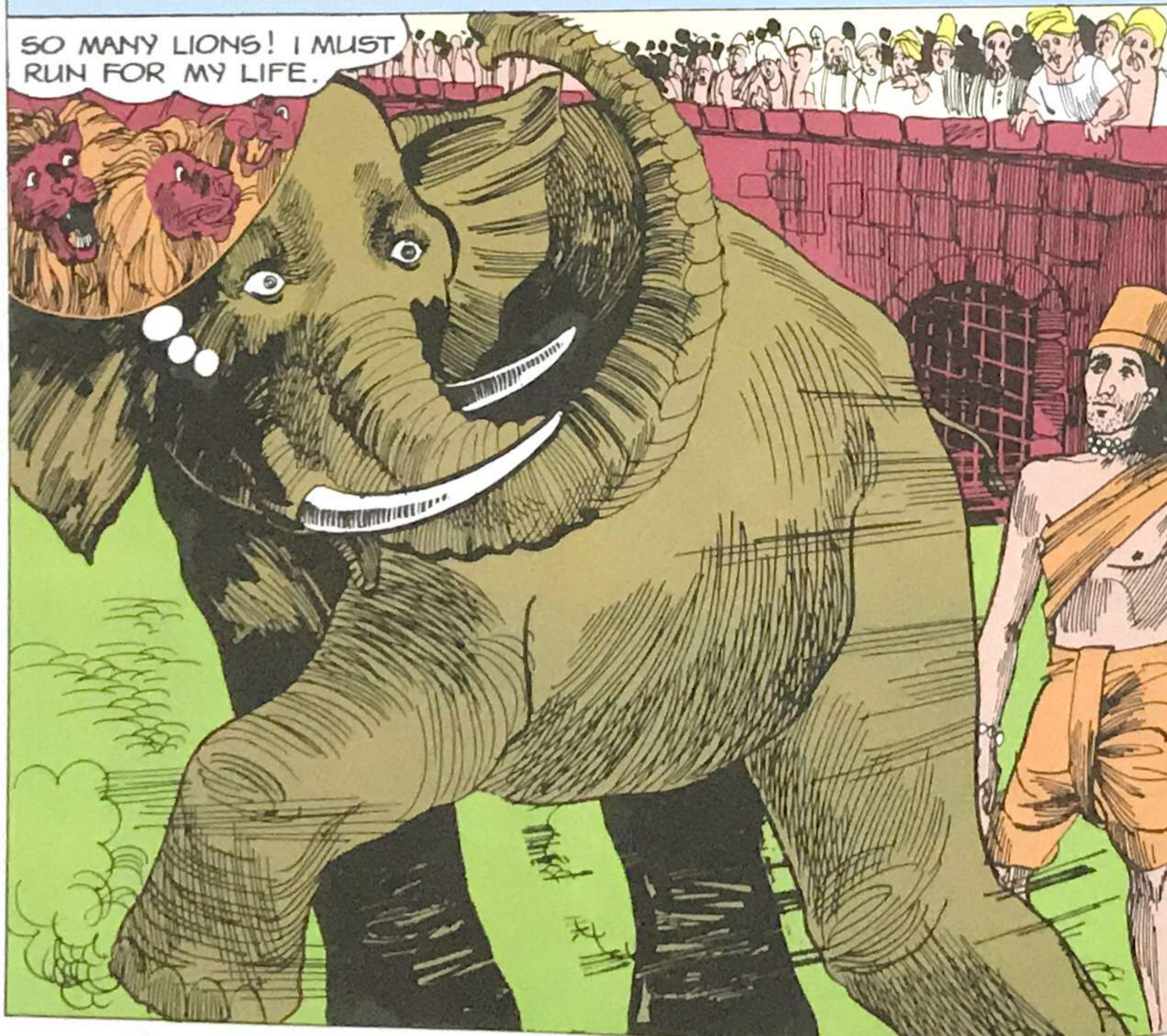
KABIR IS AN ENEMY OF OUR RELIGION; HE THINKS HIMSELF TO BE GOD. CHAIN HIM AND DROWN HIM.



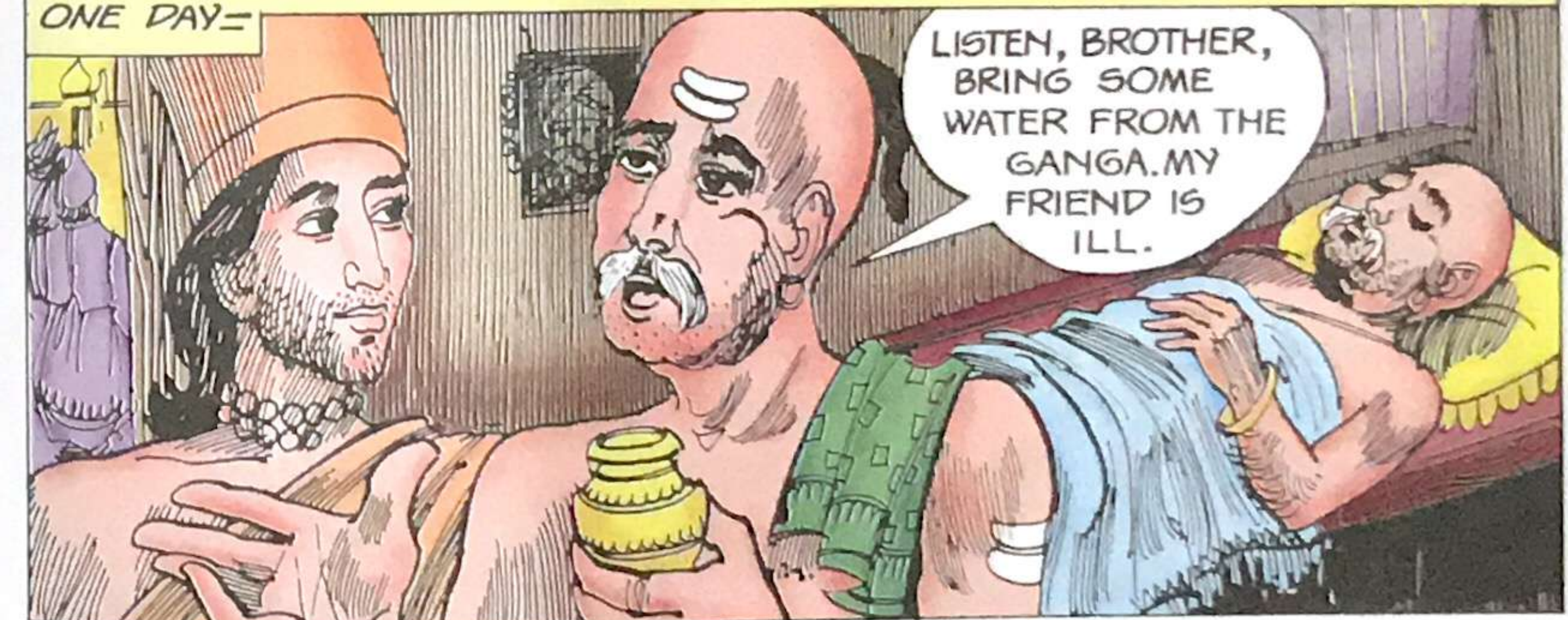


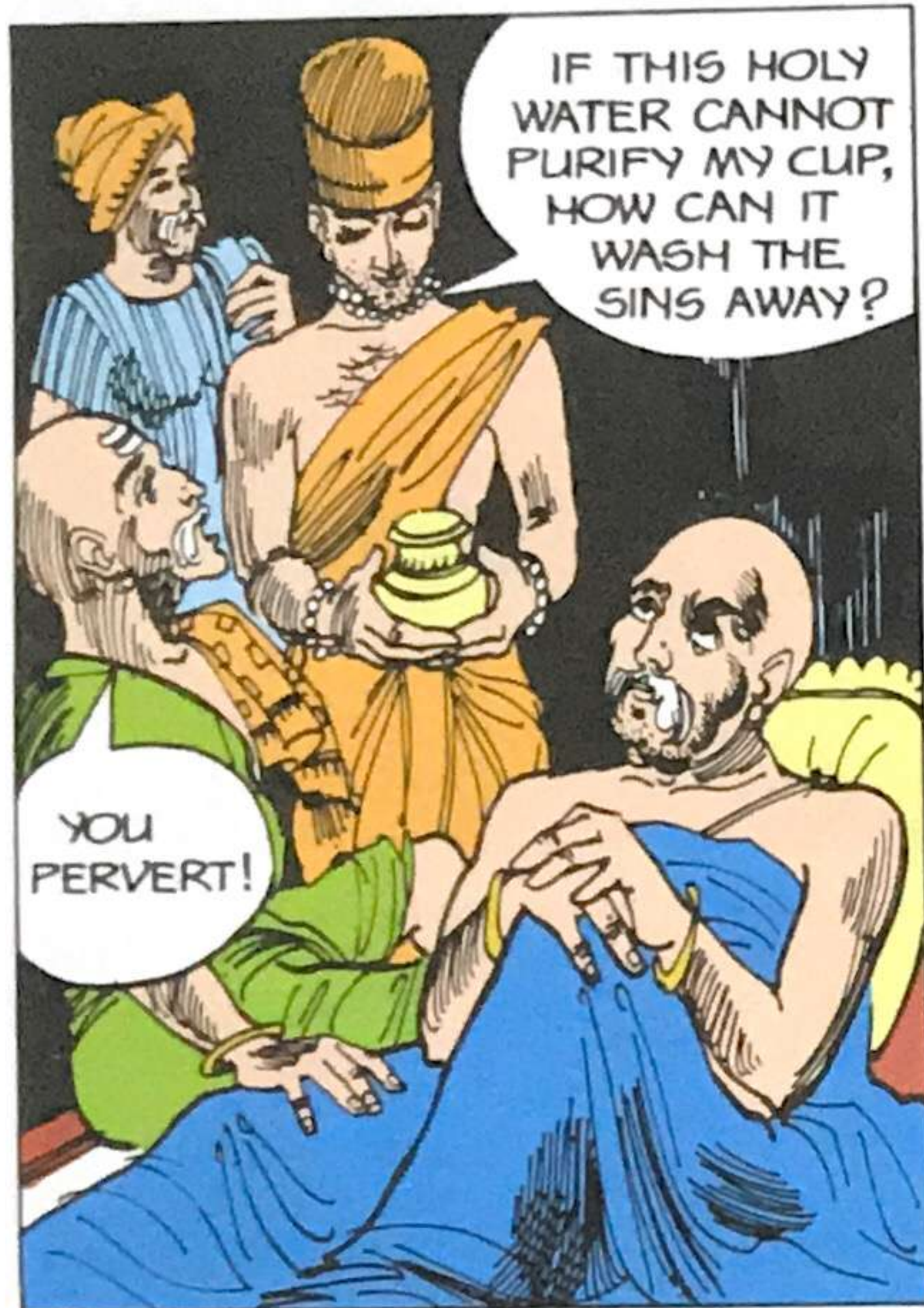


BUT THE MIRACLES DID NOT END. THE ELEPHANT SAW A GROUP OF ANGRY LIONS INSTEAD OF A MAN.



BUT PEOPLE STILL SHUNNED KABIR AND TREATED HIM AS AN OUTCASTE. ONE DAY—





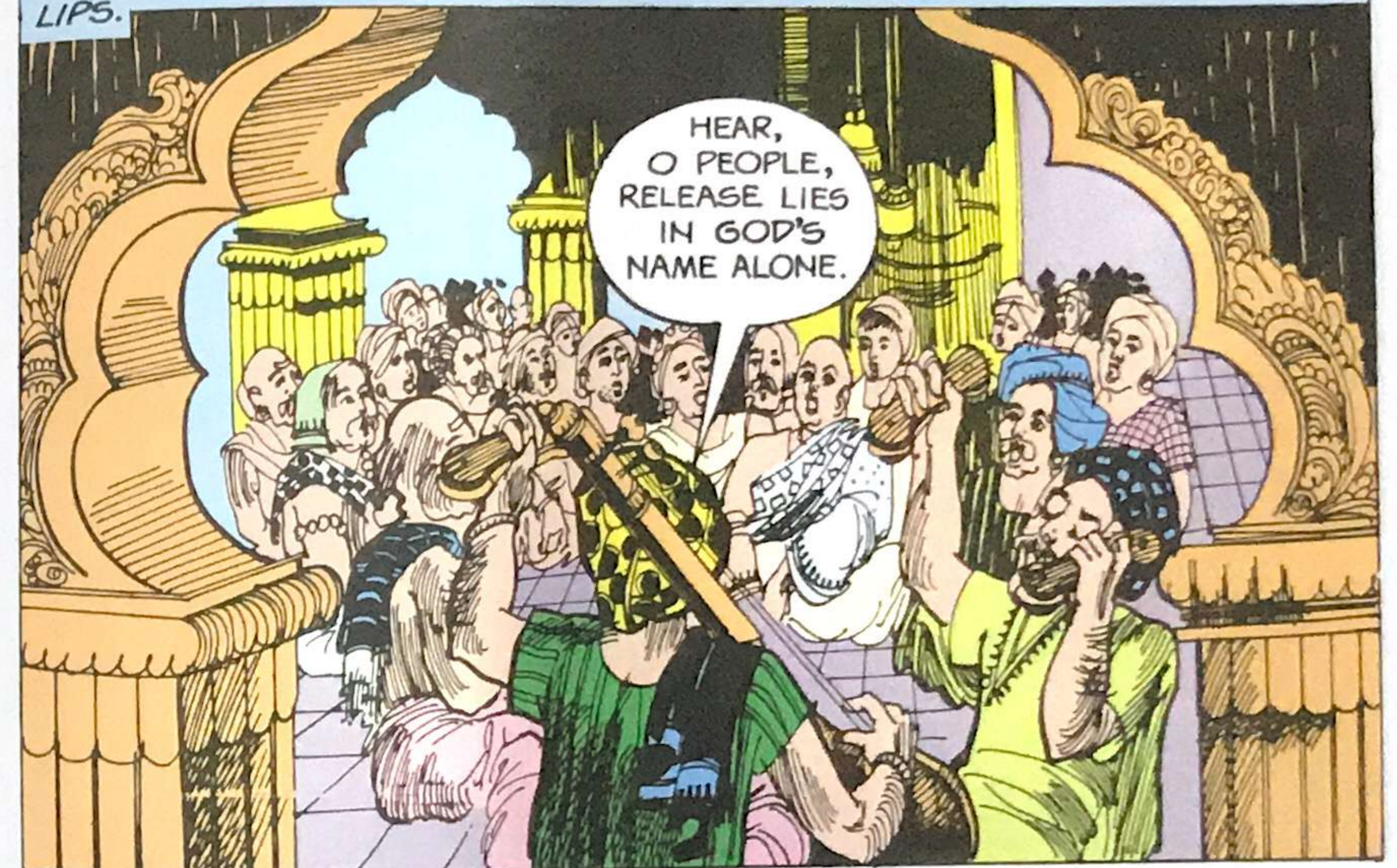
GRADUALLY, PEOPLE FLOCKED TO HIM. HIS SAYINGS SPREAD FAR AND WIDE.



HIS DISCIPLES WANDERED ALL OVER INDIA, SINGING HIS SACRED SONGS.



MILLIONS BECAME KABIR'S FOLLOWERS, HIS BHAVANS WERE ON PEOPLE'S LIPS.



HE REMAINED HUMBLE AND CARED NOTHING FOR WORLDLY POSSESSIONS.





POOR MAN. WE HAVE NOTHING FOR HIM.



THE THIEF STUMBLED.

AHH!



QUICK, LIGHT THE LAMP, HE WILL HURT HIMSELF IN THE DARK.



HERE BROTHER, SEE IF YOU CAN FIND ANYTHING WORTHWHILE.



FORGIVE ME, SIR.

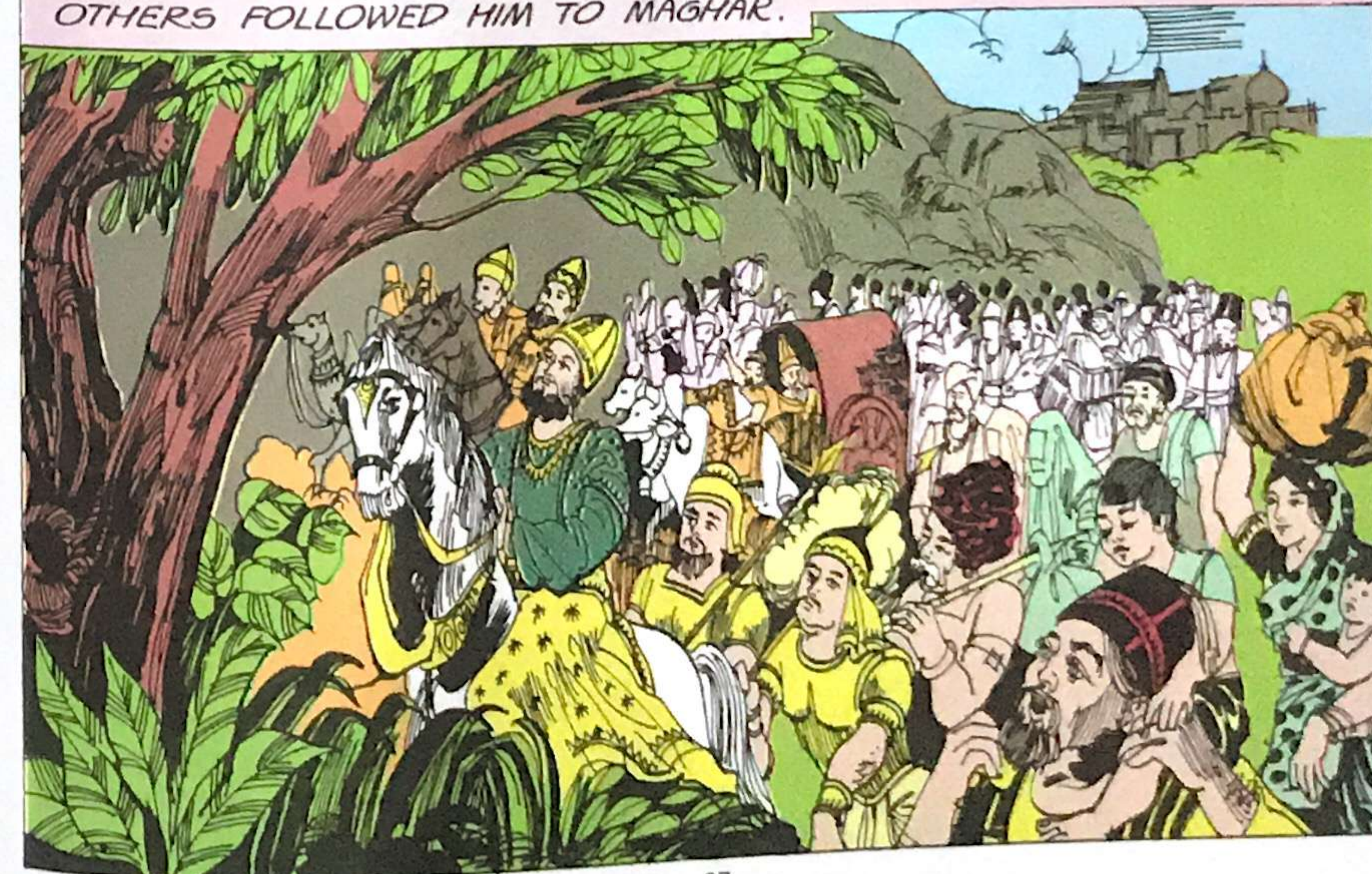


WHEN KABIR'S END WAS NEAR—

I WOULD LIKE TO DIE AT MAGHAR.

MAGHAR? SIR, THOSE WHO DIE THERE DON'T GO TO HEAVEN, IT IS BELIEVED.

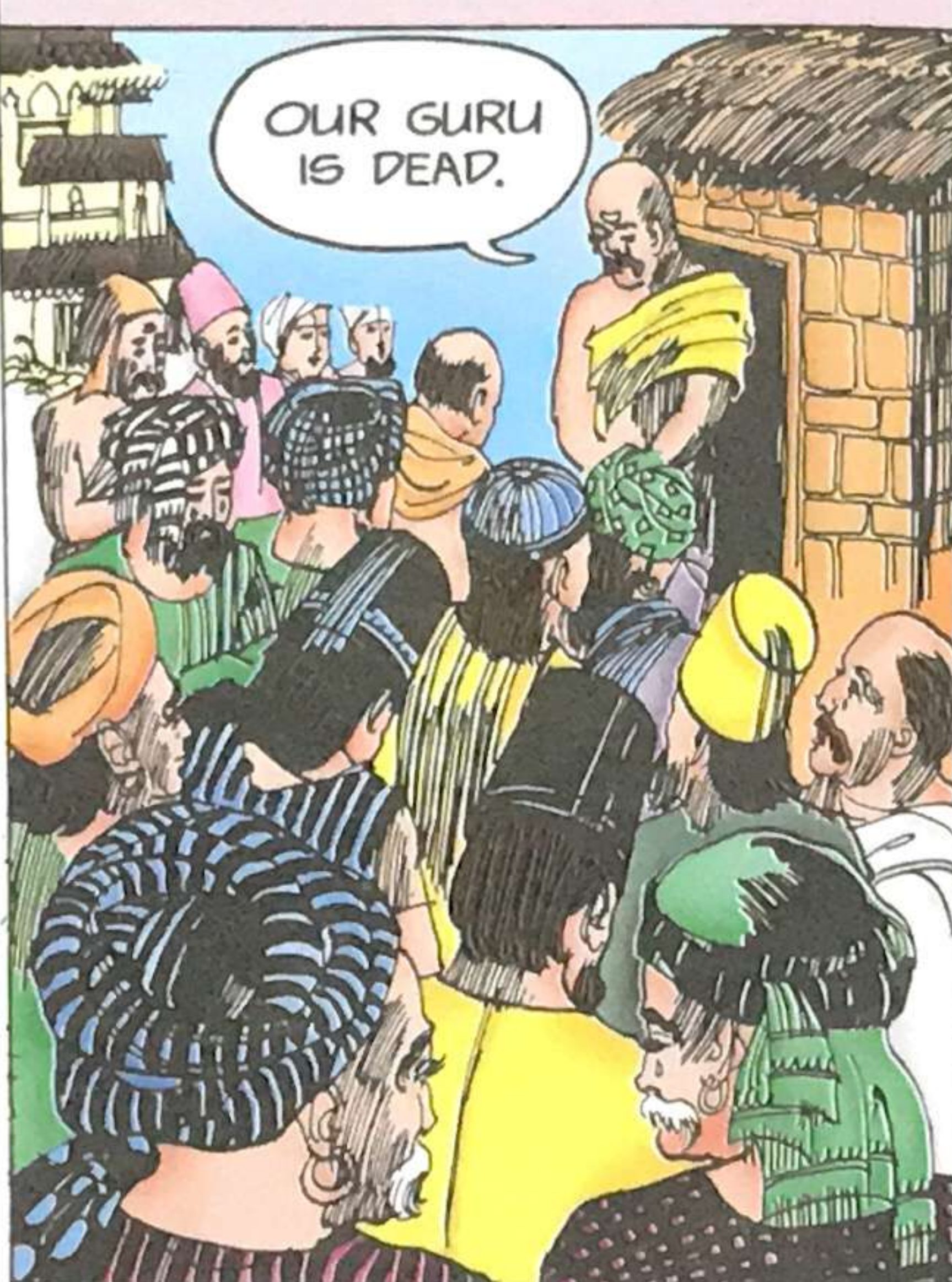
KABIR WAS DETERMINED TO FREE PEOPLE FROM SUPERSTITION. HE LEFT VARANASI. KINGS, DEVOTEES AND SEVERAL OTHERS FOLLOWED HIM TO MAGHAR.



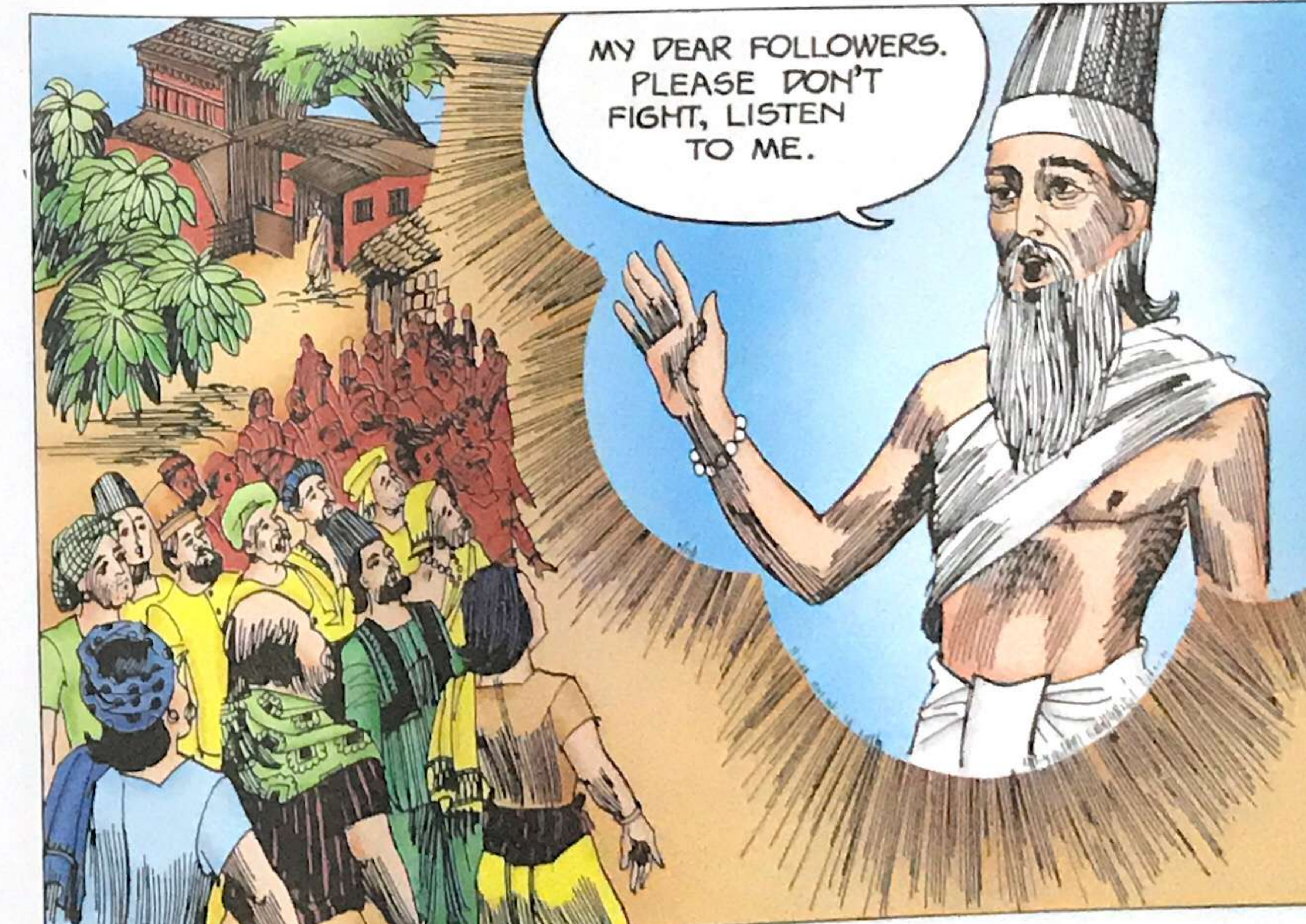
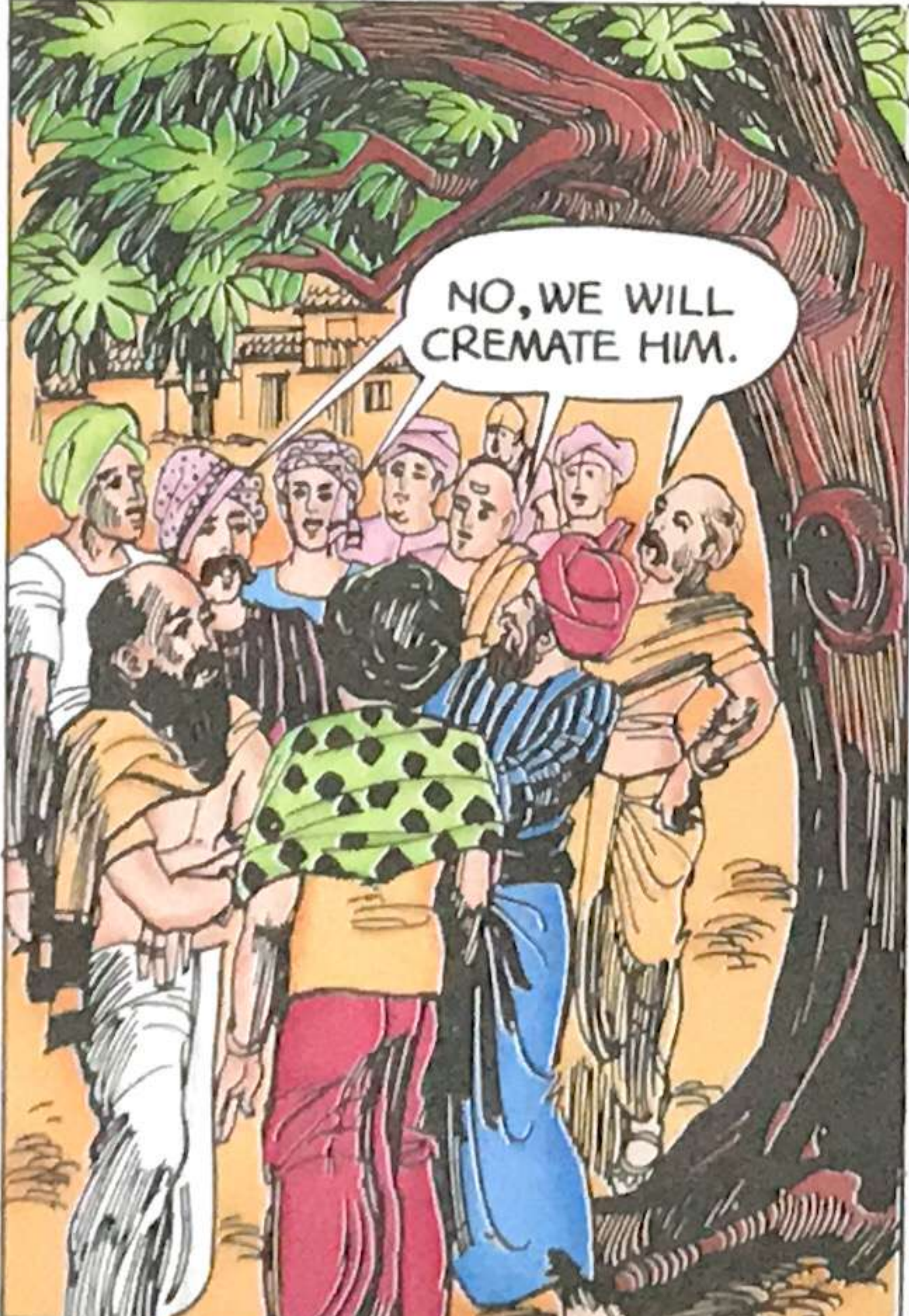
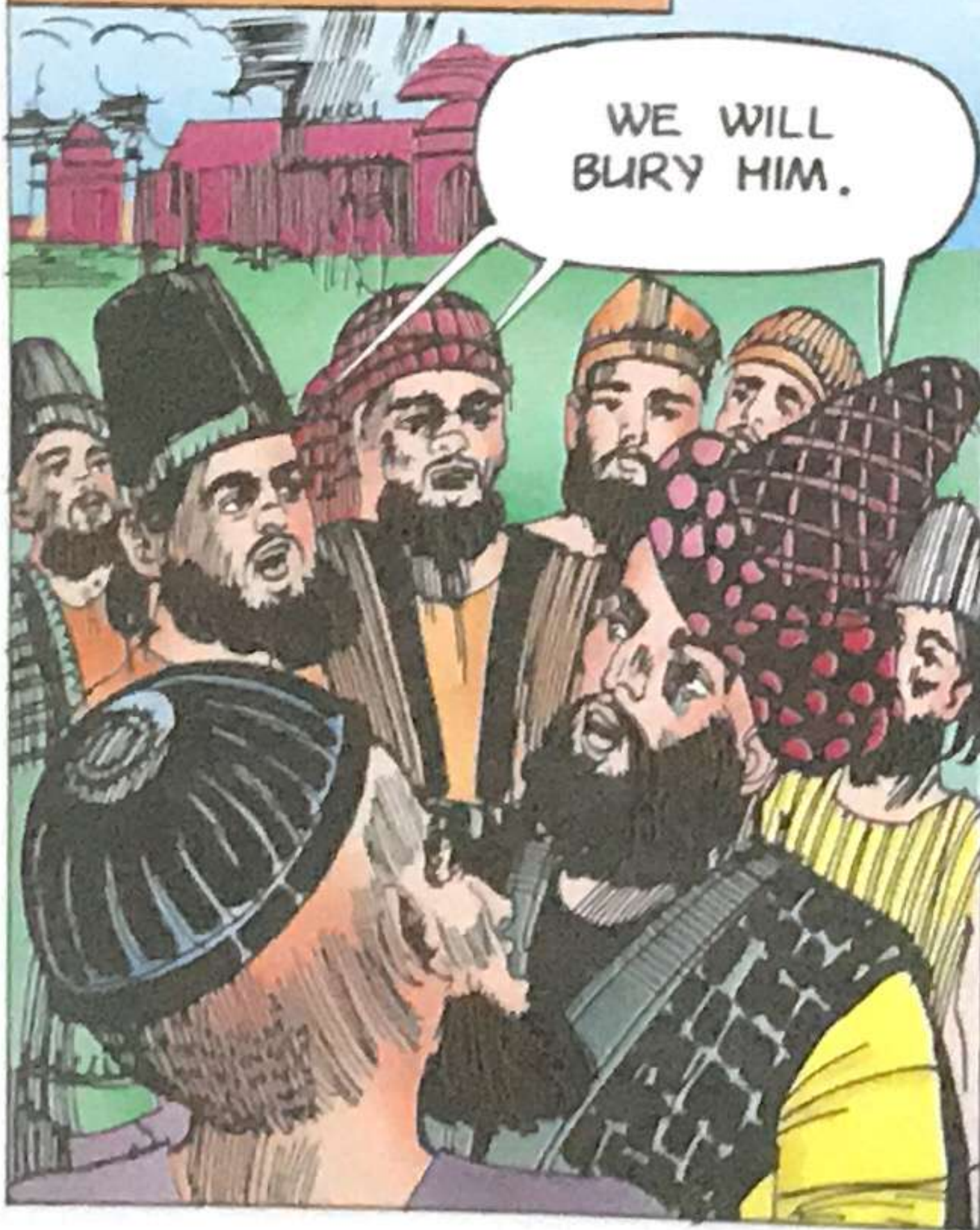
ONE DAY-

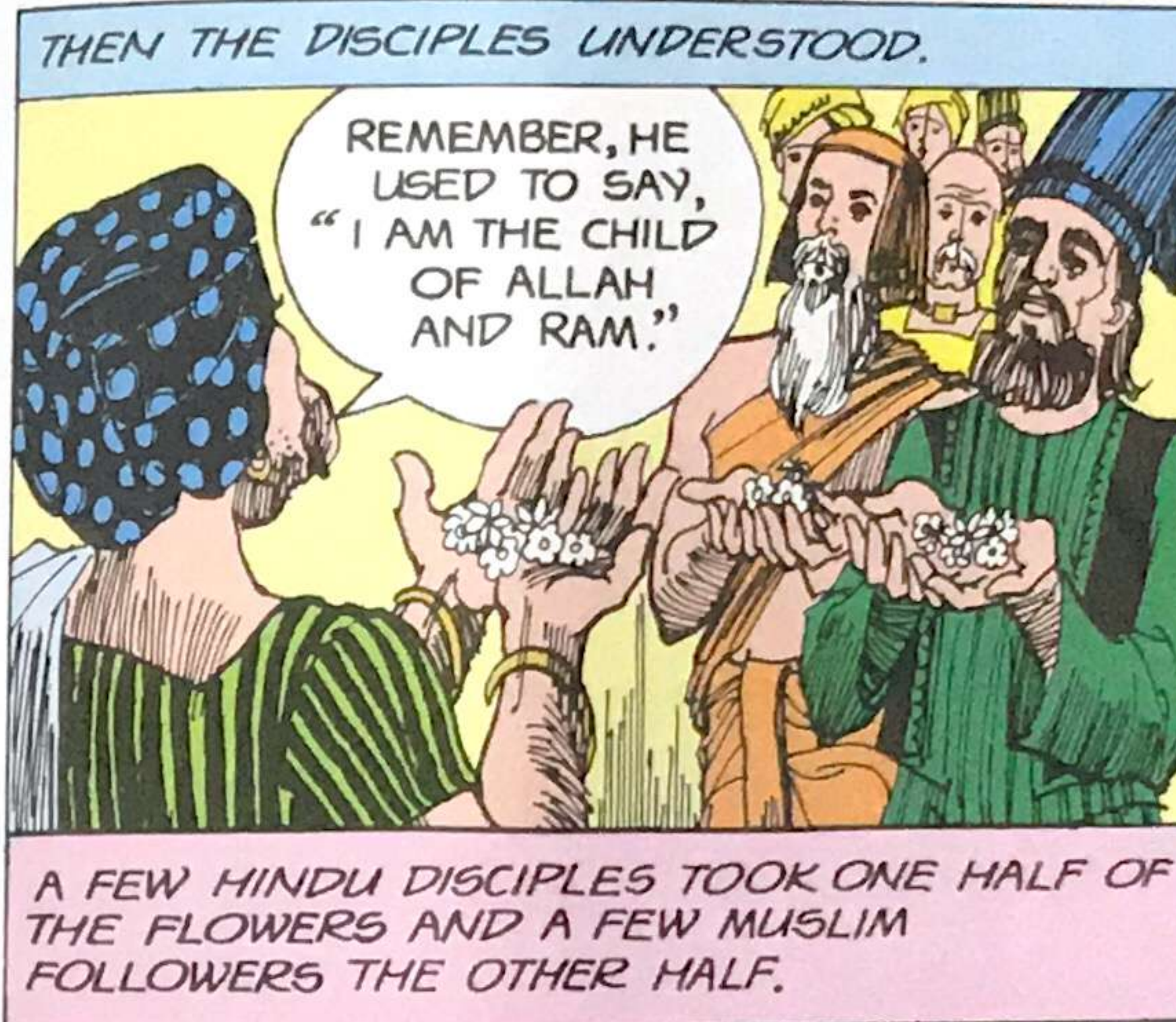
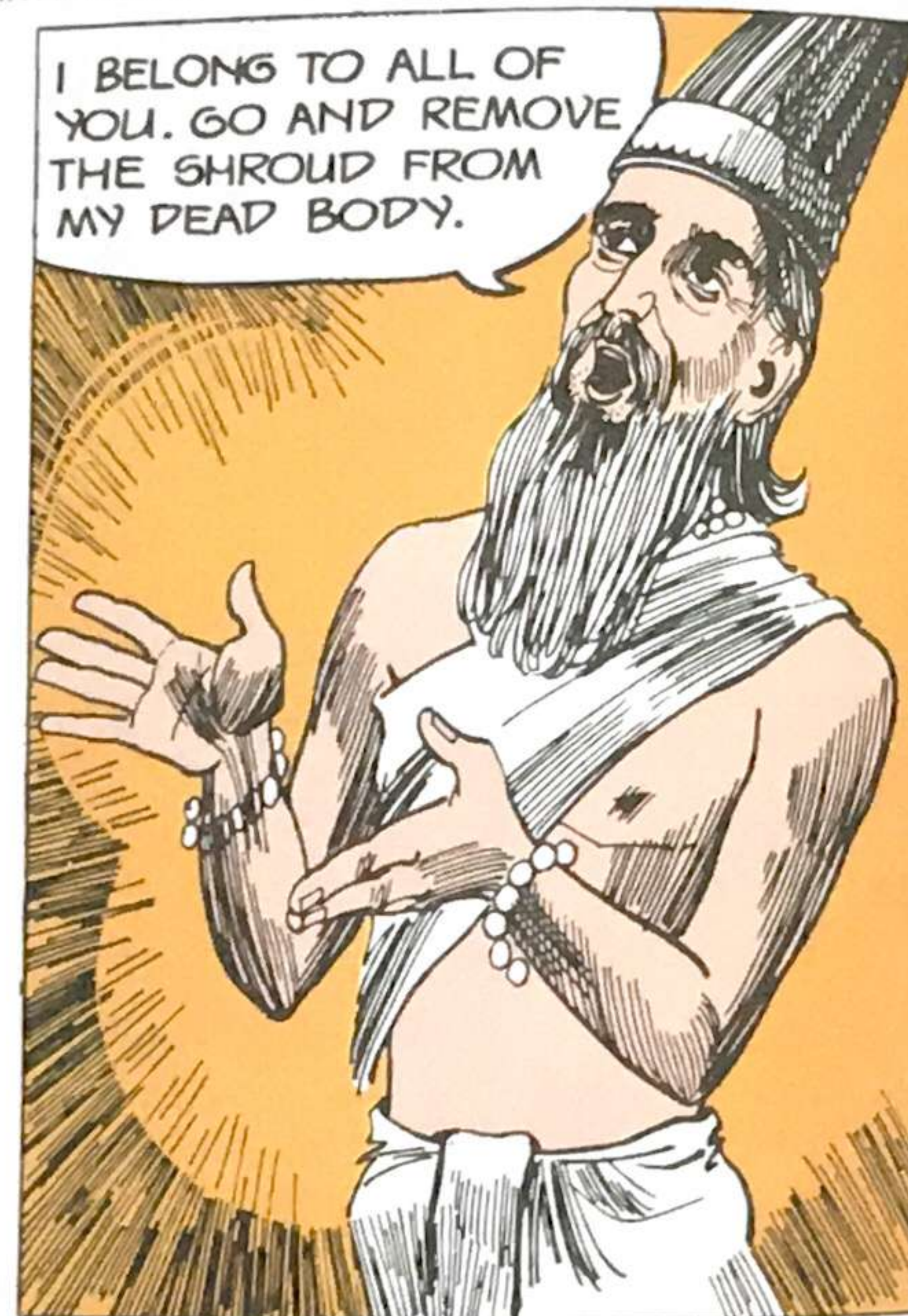
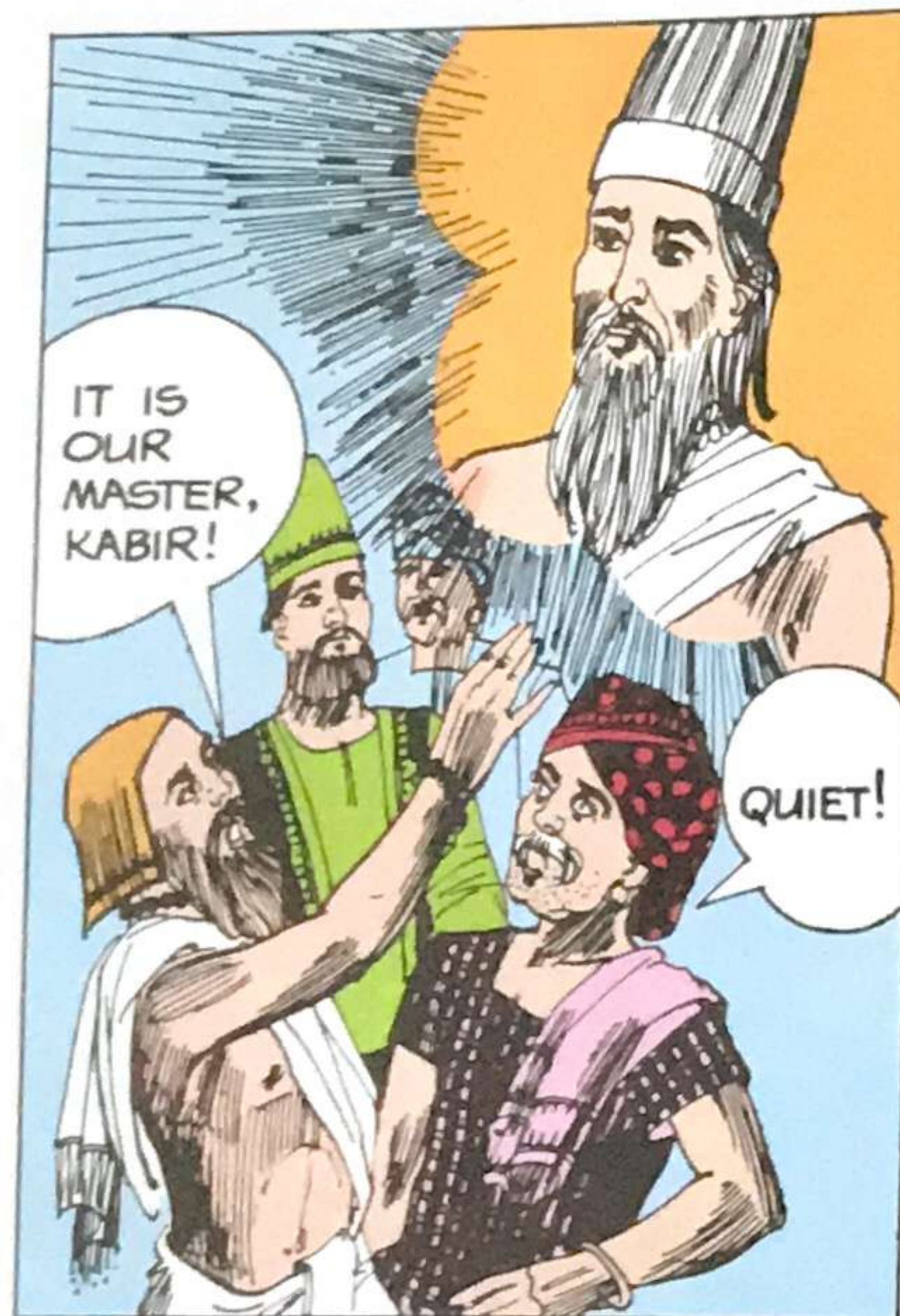


SOON THEREAFTER-



AS IN LIFE, SO IN DEATH KABIR HAD TO CONTEND WITH STUPID PEOPLE QUARRELLING.





A FEW HINDU DISCIPLES TOOK ONE HALF OF THE FLOWERS AND A FEW MUSLIM FOLLOWERS THE OTHER HALF.



HIS TEACHINGS SPREAD FAR AND WIDE. FORTUNATELY FOR US, WE CAN STILL IMBIBE THE MESSAGE OF KABIR AND THE SPIRIT OF HIS TEACHINGS FROM HIS WORDS, FOREVER PRESERVED IN THE GREAT WORK 'BIAK'.